

THE STORY OF
**A WEST INDIAN
POLICEMAN**

BY
HERBERT T. THOMAS

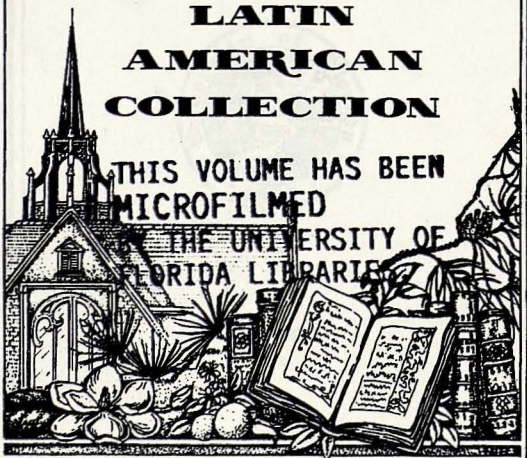
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To Mr. W. Turvill, with the
kindest regards of his unknown
friend, the Author, in token
of gratitude for his kind en-
deavours to bring about the
publication of this book in
the old country.

Robert J. Thomas

3 Gerrard Place
Kingston, Jamaica
May 1927

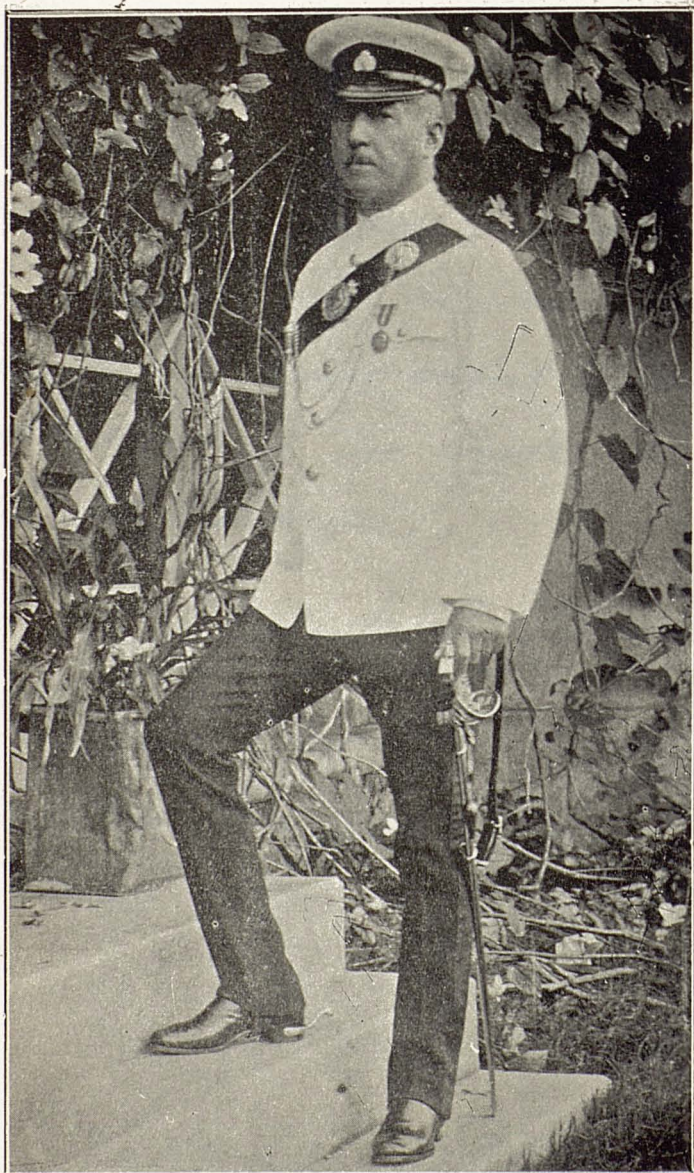


Photo by Young, Falmouth
THE AUTHOR, AGED 67.

**THE STORY OF
A WEST INDIAN POLICEMAN
OR
FORTY-SEVEN YEARS
IN
THE JAMAICA CONSTABULARY**

**BY
HERBERT T. THOMAS
LATE INSPECTOR IN THAT FORCE,
(AUTHOR OF "UNTRODDEN JAMAICA.")**

Printed by
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LATIN
AMERICA

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

*There's a chiel' amang us takin' notes,
And, faith, he'll prent 'em.*

Burns.

There was a time when I never thought of "prentin," a book; although I had, unconsciously, been "takin' notes" in a very accurate and retentive memory for many years. In my school days I was always at the top of my class in history, owing to the possession of such a memory—particularly with respect to dates; and some sixteen years ago, a young Englishman, M.A. of Cambridge, who came to this country as a schoolmaster, and became very friendly with me, told me that it was a duty which I owed to the inhabitants of this island to write a book on my experiences in the police force as soon as I should have retired. I pondered this suggestion; and then it gradually dawned upon me that to comply with it was a duty which I owed to myself. I accordingly began to unload my memory on paper, and continued to do so; chronicling all subsequent events up to my last day in the service, and collecting necessary documents.

The reader may therefore rest assured that every statement of fact which this book contains is absolutely correct in the main. There may of course be some errors in regard to matters of unimportant detail in connection with the occurrences of the remote past; but there are no men—or precious few—now alive to check these. When I come to review it, I find the death list of those who were contemporary with me very saddening. If I were to relate all I know about the people and the government of Jamaica, and to make a complete record of my own official experiences, I could fill at least two other volumes of the same size as this one. As it is I am confident

that many of the facts which I have set down will come as a startling revelation to the public of my country.

Stationed in all parts of the island for forty-seven years as I have been, and being now on the verge of celebrating my golden jubilee as a member of the Jamaica Club, I have become a walking encyclopaedia of Jamaica family histories—even those of the few with whom I am personally unacquainted. Having thus selected my material, I began to write my story as soon as I had settled down in Kingston; but with a spirit crushed and clouded by the misfortunes attendant on the close of my career, and further smitten by the financial disaster recorded in the last chapter, my literary work was produced with great mental effort, was not spontaneous, and did not do me justice.

However, I sent the M. S. to England, where friends of mine tried to place it with half-a-dozen different publishers. These all gave the same reply: that they were unwilling to undertake publication as a speculation, because my subject was not of sufficient general interest, being too local in its purview. My friend Mr. Algernon Aspinall of the W. I. Committee advised me to try the Gleaner Company, with the view of publishing locally. This was after the M. S. had been over a year in England; and when it was returned to me, having regained my normal mentality, I revised, and practically re-wrote, the book, extending it to nearly twice its original size. I decided to do so, as will be seen, in the intimate and familiar style which suits a small community, where everybody knows everybody else, and in which I am probably known, either personally or by reputation, to more persons than any other individual man in it. In fact I have not hesitated to bare my very soul; and I do herewith commend my work to "The charity which thinketh no evil."

There will doubtless be some who will say that I have written too much about myself. To that I would reply that it is *my* story, isn't it? And must I not therefore of necessity loom large in it? And if I am

held to have erred in that direction, will you not make some allowance for the garrulity which is so often attendant on old age? And will you not also excuse, as pardonable vanity of an old man, the desire to reveal to a younger generation—of policemen especially—"which knew not Joseph," (like the new king over Egypt in the first chapter of Exodus), what manner of man was in his youth the venerable ruin they now see tottering about the streets of Kingston?

Others again may find fault with my language, as being unnecessarily strong, or bitter. With regard to the first, I claim to be in good company; for has not an eminent critic declared that such a literary light as Thomas Carlyle "thought in a passion"? At any rate my language can, I submit, claim the merit of being entirely devoid of all ambiguity, and that no sane person can fail to understand it. As regards the bitterness, I venture to think that in view of the treatment meted out to me, and of the misfortunes which have befallen me, as depicted in these pages, I should have been either very much more than human, or less than human, if the iron had not deeply entered my soul even before I reached middle age. I do not think I need do more to justify the bitterness than refer to the separation from my near and dear ones, resulting from that treatment, from March 1902 until to-day—with exception of two short months in 1909: separation on which in five cases the hand of death has already set the seal of eternity. So much for my countrymen, by birth and adoption!

With regard to the strangers from overseas into whose hands this book may fall, I cherish the hope that they will find in it sufficient to attract them apart from my personal concerns. But I also make bold to foresee that many of them—generous, good-natured and kindly-hearted folk as I know them to be in the main—will be induced to take a human interest in the writer as well.

For being able to meet the financial requirements attendant on the publication of the book, I have to

thank various fellow officers of the police, and of other branches of the public service, as well as friends outside, who obtained subscribers for me. But most of all am I indebted to that shining example to the men of the Jamaica Constabulary, Sergeant-Major Black, for his unwearying and successful efforts in that direction among the members of the force.

HERBERT T. THOMAS.

8 Geffrard Place,
Kingston, Jamaica,
December, 1926.

INTRODUCTORY.

Chapter 1.

INTRODUCTORY.

This book is intended in the first instance for the inhabitants of the Island of Jamaica and for persons connected with, or interested in the colony; then for the residents of other West Indian countries; and lastly for such of the members of the great British public as may be desirous to extend their knowledge of Great Britain Beyond the Seas, of which this little island forms a small, but by no means insignificant or uninteresting portion.

There was a time when the general public knew nothing about Jamaica except that it was celebrated for the excellence of its rum; but those days are, I think, past; although no doubt the advertisement of that product which has been so widely broadcasted by means of the 'Planters' Punch' at Wembley will revive the recollection. A good deal has been written about the island in recent years, chiefly in the line of articles in magazines and newspapers. Scenes from Jamaica have also been incidentally introduced into novels dealing with tropical life. Some of the writers of these have been globe-trotters of the same type as Kipling's "Paget, M.P." Others have suffered from lack of sufficient knowledge, and from a credulity which seems almost child-like; among these the Americans easily taking the first place. Others again have written under the influence of a complaint to which I have given the name of "Tropicalitis." This is a men-

tal disease, brought on by the glamour of the eternal summer, the constant sunshine, the luxuriance of the vegetation, the flashing and murmuring streams, the blue, blue waves breaking on the coral beaches, and the witchery of the mellow moonlight; all of which tend to obfuscate reasoned judgment and sense of proportion. Even a writer of the calibre of J. A. Froude succumbed to this influence when he set down in his "Bow of Ulysses" the statement that the light of the fireflies was carried in lanterns hung at the ends of their antennae.

Another and more recent case of this complaint was presented by an American lady who visited the island on a honeymoon trip, in a yacht bearing the extraordinary name of "Speejacks." On returning home she described Kingston, in writing a survey of her trip for the American press, as "a city of unusual beauty." Certainly, if Kingston may be described as possessing any "beauty," "unusual" becomes a most fitting term wherewith to qualify such a description.

Yet another, and still more recent case is that of the "educated and travelled Englishman," who was stated by a reporter in the columns of the *Gleaner* to have called Kingston "the cleanest city he had ever seen." It is difficult to imagine a case of "tropicalitis" exhibiting more virulent symptoms than this; and no doubt this gentleman's description of our metropolis must have administered a severe shock to the intelligent residents.

Lastly, there is the disgruntled writer who, having from the very first moment of his landing struck an inharmonious note, takes a savage pleasure in heaping calumny on the country and its inhabitants;

exaggerating the unpleasant aspects which undoubtedly do offer themselves to a sensitive observer, and refusing to see any redeeming feature in anything. The most shining exemplar of this type of writer is one Keith-Jopp, who recently published a novel, the scene of which is laid in Jamaica, and which has obviously been written with a pen dipped in gall of the bitterest quality.

I think, however, that I am on firm ground when I claim that this book of mine is written from an entirely novel, original and unique standpoint, which is fully explained in the title; and it is scarcely necessary for me to say that all the facts therein set down are either taken from my own personal experience, or supported by unimpeachable evidence. No doubt the truths thus recorded will be unpalatable to some people; but I have always had the courage of my opinions—perhaps in too marked a degree for my own comfort while in the public service—and I am not likely to show the white feather now that I have shaken off the shackles of official life.

Most Jamaicans are, as the editor of our one daily paper frequently reminds them, inclined to be thin-skinned, and to resent the telling of unpleasant truths about their country. This has come to be known as “Knocking” Jamaica; and they object to its being done by any one who is not a native of the island. They suffer from a conceit which makes it difficult for them to realise what an infinitesimal and insignificant scrap of the great world Jamaica is; and they lose sight of that immortal couplet of the poet Burns:—

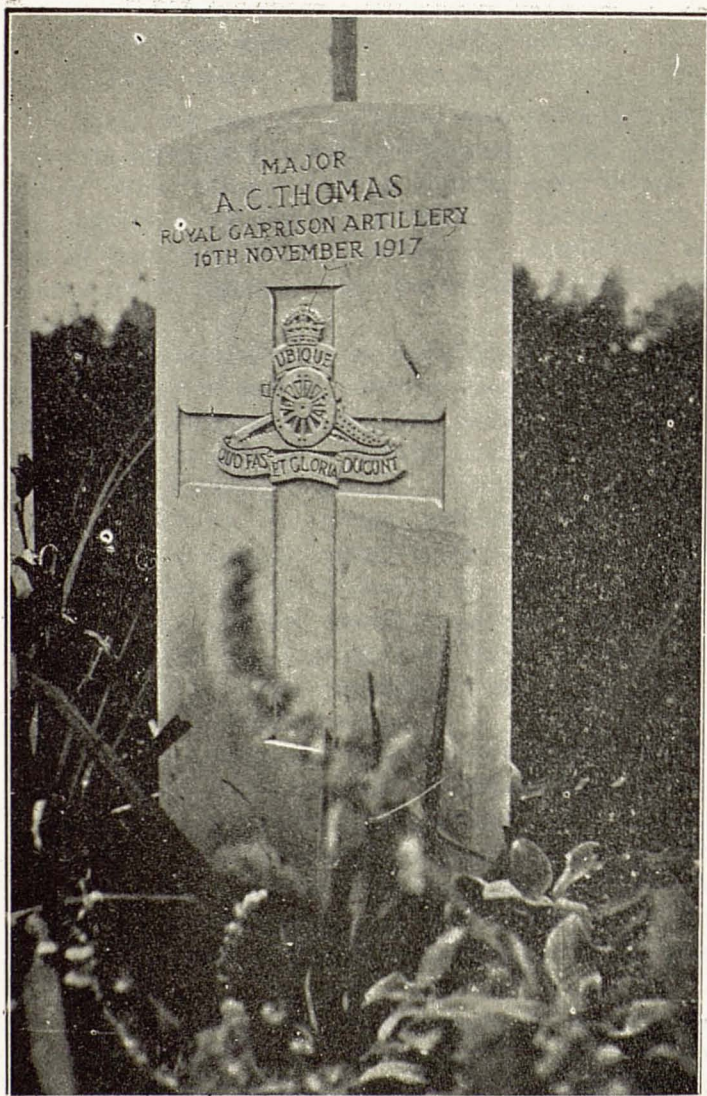
"Oh, wad some power the giftie gie us
To see ourselves as others see us."

Some negroes of the baser sort nowadays even have the effrontery to refer to Englishmen as "foreigners;" while others seem to cherish some dream of the possibility of creating a "nation," as they put it, out of the many heterogeneous and conflicting elements which constitute the population of their little country.

Some even during a recent election of a member of the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation carried their impudence to the length of trying to induce the electors not to vote for a certain candidate, because he was an Englishman, forsooth! It is pleasing to record, however, that the voters had sufficient good sense to return this "foreigner" over the head of his Jamaican rival by a substantial majority; the said "foreigner" being a man who had spent the greater part of his life in the country; had married into a Jamaica family; and had rendered yeoman service to the city of Kingston in a public capacity.

This last symptom is a noxious weed of recent growth; and I do not recollect its pushing its ugly head above ground on any previous occasion. It is no doubt a sample of the tares among the wheat which are being sedulously sown by a certain Association, which is dealt with in a subsequent chapter. But the above is more or less a digression; and I hasten to take up the thread once more.

Nothing, however, in the shape of objection on the score of nationality can possibly be levelled at me. Not only am I a Jamaican, in the third generation, but I have served my native country in the capacity of an



ONE OF "THE GLORIOUS DEAD." (TALANA FARM CEMETERY, BELGIUM).

officer of police for upwards of forty-seven years—a period which in point of time alone constitutes a record, as far as my knowledge goes—and that with loyalty and zeal, which may have been equalled but never surpassed, and efficiency such as those who read my book will be able to appraise for themselves.

In addition to that my humble family of Jamaicans holds the record of the entire British West India Colonies for service to and sacrifice for the Empire. I had five sons, all of whom served in the Great War, on land, at sea, and in the air. For the eldest of them it was his second campaign, as he had enlisted in England during the Boer war from Bedford school as a trooper in Baden-Powell's South African Constabulary, and served through the last fifteen months of that campaign, earning the King's medal with five clasps. Of the five the three eldest were killed in action during the war in consecutive years; two in France, and one in East Africa; while the fifth and youngest, who had passed through the whole war in the Air service without a scratch, perished after nearly three years of peace in the disaster which occurred at Hull in 1921 to the airship R 38. Of the five two were decorated: the second with the Distinguished Service Cross for his part in the Suvla Bay landing at Gallipoli; while the youngest was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for sinking a German submarine in the North Sea, with all hands a few weeks before the armistice.

In addition to my own direct descendants my only brother's only child, my one nephew, who won the Jamaica Rhodes scholarship of 1913, received a commission at Oxford in the Royal Field Artillery on the

raising of "Kitchener's Army," and served to within two months of the Armistice, when he was invalided home.

Such is the record of myself and my humble family; and if on the face of that I may not regard myself as entitled to express my opinions respecting my native country and its inhabitants "without fear, favour or affection," I should like to know who else may.

In judging my work I would ask the reader to bear in mind that, as we are all more or less the playthings of circumstance and environment, the various unpleasant, unique, and sometimes tragic experiences of my life set down in these pages—as well as many others which do not appear therein, this not being by any means a complete autobiography—have had the effect of gradually converting an ingenuous and confiding youth, brimming over with the milk of human kindness, into a cynic, a sceptic, a pessimist, and very nearly a misanthrope, long before I reached the age of seventy.

Finally, I deeply regret that so very many of the contemporary witnesses of the events herein recorded, and of persons spoken of generally, have in the natural order of things passed over to the great majority; and that I have been consequently sometimes under the necessity of speaking unkindly of the dead. But in my opinion *de mortuis nil nisi verum* is just as good a maxim as the same one ending in *bonum*. If that were not the case, then posterity has dealt very unkindly with such persons as Nero, Judas Iscariot, and the late Dr. Crippen, for instance.

Chapter II.

THE COUNTRY.

The island of Jamaica is situated in the Caribbean Sea between 17 and 18 degrees north of the Equator, and is third of the West Indian islands in point of size. It is about 144 miles in length, and its width varies from 50 to 22 miles; while its total area is 4,200 square miles. It lies sprawling on the bosom of the waters, in shape very much like an alligator; and it consists, roughly speaking, of a backbone of mountain running along its entire length from east to west, with countless subsidiary ridges branching off at every conceivable angle down to the sea. Of its 4,200 square miles of area only about 2,000—or little less than half—lie at less than 1,000 feet above sea-level; while in the Blue Mountain range at the eastern end of the island the highest peak attains an altitude of 7,450 feet. This entire range is clothed with profuse vegetation up to the very summit. There are no bleak and barren peaks standing aloft. All are clad with a mantle of dense virgin forest, of so dark a verdure as to lend the tint of deep azure which has earned for the highest range the name of "Blue Mountains." In nearly every cleft of this mass of mountain there is running water, especially in the east and north. Streams roar and babble over rocks, boulders, and pebbles under the shade of forest trees; or, in the limestone regions, burrow their course underground, flashing out now and then for a brief space into the

light of day, and uniting to form rivers which flow into the sea on the north or south sides of the island. Owing to the precipitous formation of their beds only two of these rivers are navigable for any distance from their mouths. The larger of these is the Black River in the parish of St. Elizabeth, which is used as a water highway to the sea for some thirty miles of its course. The immediate neighbourhood of this river also affords the supreme illustration of the process of underground percolation mentioned above, in the existence of some 60,000 acres of morass, all the water of which is fresh and thickly grown with reeds and other aquatic vegetation; and, most remarkable of all, possessing the only lake in the island. This is a body of pure, sweet water, fed by several springs issuing from the adjacent hills. It is one mile in length, and covers an area of about 100 acres, partially clothed with water-lilies, and of enormous depth. It discharges with a steady flow on the southern side through an adjoining morass into the sea, which is about a mile away. So little is the existence of this lake known that I found scores of people living in the parish, and belonging to the better educated classes, who had never heard of it until I told them.

There are in various other localities ponds and lagoons of salt or brackish water, but none of them approach in size this inexhaustible reservoir of the pure liquid which I have described. It is situated only five miles from the town of Black River; but owing to the surroundings the only purpose which it so far serves is to furnish the water supply for the scattered negro settlements lying in the vicinity.

The average untravelled Jamaican is fond of as-

serting that his island is "the most beautiful country in the world," being quite unable to realise what a very large order that is; and his judgment is not infrequently endorsed by casual visitors suffering under the influence of what I have described as "Tropicalitis."

Certainly there are gems of scenery here and there that will bear comparison with almost any of the beauty spots of the world. Many of these however are entirely off the beaten tracks, and are only seen by persons with a love for exploration, such as I used to be in the days of my youth. I have described several of them in my little book "Untrodden Jamaica," published in 1891.

It is a curious thing that the indigenous vegetation of the immediate neighbourhood of Kingston, the gateway of the island, is of a distinctly unlovely and repellent description. The soil however is of a wonderfully responsive nature, and with the aid of irrigation can be made to grow anything, as the gardens prove; but the native vegetation consists entirely of the scrubby and prickly growths which one associates with a desert country, save and except the *lignum vitae* trees, with their beautiful blossoms. The very grass scarcely conceals the bare earth. This kind of scenery extends, roughly speaking, from the sea on the south, eastward to the village of White Horses in St. Thomas, and westward as far as Porus, except where the irrigation system has made the environment of the railway line about Spanish Town to blossom like the rose.

The whole of the south side along the coast line is not to be compared with the north in point of beauty, if we except the southern slopes of the Blue Mountains

and the rocky gorge known as the Bog Walk, through which the Rio Cobre has carved its way to the sea. But beginning at the village of White Horses already mentioned, right round the east end and along the whole north coast to Lucea, the most westerly town, the views are practically an unmixed delight.

Of course in a country of such a mountainous nature there are great varieties of climate. It is a far cry from the torrid zone and the malodorous mangrove swamps of the south coast to the delicious and exhilarating air of the Blue Mountains. I could take you from foetid lagoons, across the depths of whose brown waters the roots of the mangrove straddle like giant spiders, to river glades where blaze scarlet clumps of the single *Amaryllis* lily; to swelling pastures where but for the arching plumes of the graceful bamboo and an occasional giant cotton tree, you might easily imagine yourself in a bit of English grazing country. I could take you higher still, and show you dogroses and blackberries growing by the wayside; red and yellow gladiolus blooming among the coffee trees; and hedges of scarlet geranium three feet high encircling gardens filled with nothing but English blossoms. We could go higher still, and feast on wild strawberries until our teeth were on edge, and perhaps obtain a few luscious peaches. There are coves of sparkling water fringed with coral beaches where maidenhair fern clothes the rocks down to the water's edge, its delicate fronds often seared with the salt sea spray.

And there are rocky gorges where the mountain torrent roars and flashes along a hundred feet below the path, while the stately tree-ferns nod and whisper overhead, amid clusters of pink and white begonias



Photo by N. deMontagnac.

THE BLUE HOLE, PORTLAND,

and wreaths of crimson ipomoea. Then at eve, with your day's wandering at an end, you may listen to the gurgling chorus of the bullfrogs and the chirp of the crickets, and watch the fireflies flit in and out among the branches, while the land-breeze rustles the leaves of the tall coconut palms, and the silver moon, adding to the witchery of the tepid, languorous night, floods the landscape and the murmuring wavelets of the sea at your feet with a mellow light.

I once, many years ago, attempted to embody these impressions in verse, which I now venture to inflict upon the reader.

A DREAM OF JAMAICA.

Island of forest dark and silver stream!
Thy stately mountains at the dawning's gleam
Tower o'er the restless wave that beats thy shore
With creamy crest, and sullen, ceaseless roar.
Clothing their peaks in cloud, they calmly gaze
Into the opal East, and wait the rays
That soon shall steal across the dimpled deep
To rouse their many-tinted world from sleep.
Lo! how on peak and ridge, in dark ravine
Leaps into life anew the forest green;
Rose-red and purple, blue and golden, glow
The mist-wreathed heights above, the plains below;
There, where the torrent's rush yon dark rocks
 stem,
Hangs o'er the fall a rainbow diadem:
A dream of beauty, wrought by magic hand,
From sombre mountain peak to silver strand.

The tropic day wears on; the un pitying sun

O'er hill and plain a fiery course doth run;
Then, slowly sinking to his ocean bed,
Paints the whole western sky in flaming red.
Mark how the scarred and furrowed hillsides throw
Their answering signal to his parting glow.
Now gold, now orange, last a crimson bright
Kisses the dying sun a fond good-night,
And night-mists kind from out the valleys steal
The sun-seared hill and thirsting plain to heal.
The land-breeze sighs adown the gorges deep
And lulls the fretful waves to tuneful sleep.

The short-lived twilight fades, night's shadows fall,
And darkness shrouds thee with a scented pall.
The sweetest incense wreathes thy slumbers soft;
Of trumpet-flower and of night-jasmine waft
Abroad the forest winds the fragrance rare,
And circle thee around with perfumed air.
The golden moon uprising pours on thee
A mellow radiance, which more tenderly
Embraces thee than ever was caressed
The maid close clinging to her lover's breast.
Look where yon creeping cactus tangles droop
From tree to tree, of wanton maids a troop
Night-blooming cereus clusters boldly bare
Their virgin charms, unblushing, to the glare
Of amorous moonbeams for their one sweet night
Of passion that shall die with morning's light.

Island of forest dark and silver stream!
I fain amid thy whispering woods would dream,
Down in their ferny hollows soft and warm,
My life away in their mysterious charm.

Oft have I roamed thy silent forests through,
Heard the green parrot scream, the blue-dove coo ;
Oft have I listened while the solitaire
Thrilled with his plaintive note the mountain air ;
Oft have I by the camp-fire's fitful light
Hearkened the solemn voices of the night.
Often have I by fern-bowered waterfall,
Lurking neath moss-clad trunks and tree-ferns tall
Thought that amid such scenes 'twere sweet to lay
Me down to rest, and end life's weary day.

It is an undeniable fact that the numbers of tourists from temperate climes who visit Jamaica during the winter months do not see the country at its best; although of course at that season the climate is more endurable. It is the very driest time of the year, especially during the droughts which have been so persistent of late. All vegetation is more or less athirst; and most of the deciduous trees, among them the graceful feathery bamboo, are almost leafless. The full glory of leaf and flower comes at a later period. These visitors—if they arrive early enough—may see the pale gold of the logwood blossom covering countless acres, at the west end of the island especially, and smell its honeyed sweetness; but they do not see the pink clouds of the dogwood, or inhale the fragrance of sweetwood, ackee or guinep, and other flowering trees. They miss the divine aroma of the coffee and the pimento blossom; which latter is such a marked feature of that part of the island where it grows most profusely, that it finds a place in the chronicles recording the discovery of Jamaica by Columbus in May 1494 and his landing at St. Ann's Bay. The pimento

grows in greater quantities in the parish of St. Ann than anywhere else in the island, and May is the month of its blooming. There must have been whole forests of it growing there in 1494; and it is easy for us even at this day to imagine how the whole atmosphere must have been laden with the divine fragrance which was borne seaward by the land-breeze and to the Spanish ships lying at anchor off the coast.

Politically, the whole island is divided into fourteen parishes, which practically correspond to the counties in England. Each has its chief town, in which are situated the offices of the different public departments: courts, revenue, medical, police, etc., and each has a body which carries out the functions of the local government board for administering the internal affairs of the parish. Kingston, the capital of the island, forms a parish by itself, and contains the seat of government and the headquarters of all the various departments of the public service. All these divisions are fully illustrated by the map inserted in the book.

Chapter III.

CLIMATE AND NATURAL HISTORY.

There are even now—although rapidly on the decrease—many erroneous ideas prevailing in England about the climate of Jamaica; ideas for which such stories as “Tom Cringle’s Log,” “The Cruise of The Midge” and some of Captain Marryat’s novels are chiefly responsible. These books breathe an atmosphere permeated by rum and yellow fever: a hectic life of riot and debauchery, terminating in swift death by Yellow Jack. They may have been faithful pictures of Jamaica life in the latter part of the 18th and early in the 19th centuries, but they have long ceased to be such. I think I am correct in asserting that the dreaded yellow fever—of which two serious outbreaks have occurred within my own recollection—never was indigenous to, or endemic in the island, but was always brought here from Cuba, or Central or South America. And now the origin of the disease has been so thoroughly ascertained, and the science of sanitation has reached such a pitch of perfection, that the very name of yellow fever is never mentioned any more.

In the year 1889 the officer who was then at the head of the Army Medical Department, as it was called in those days, compiled statistics dating from 1817, the first year in which available records could be found, up to 1889. His investigations showed that whereas the death-rate among the troops from 1817

to 1836 was 121.3 per thousand, in the last decade of the period under review, namely from 1880 to 1889, it had been reduced to 11.36 or just one-eleventh of what it had been in the first twenty years. And this calculation, be it remembered, includes deaths from all causes, and has no particular reference to fevers or any other distinctively tropical diseases. I am not aware whether any similar statistics have been compiled by the military authorities since; but if they have, I am confident that the results are still more reassuring. I only know that whereas, within my own experience, it was always considered imperative that the detachment of white troops quartered in the island should be stationed in the cantonment of Newcastle in the Blue Mountains, 4,000 feet above the sea, they have for many years past occupied barracks in the lowlands at Up Park Camp, just north of Kingston; and that their sick list compares favourably with that of the black soldiers of the West India Regiment, which has its headquarters in the same place. In certain parts of the island the climate has a marvellously beneficial effect on persons suffering from pulmonary complaints. I have known people with respect to whom I should not be in the least offended if anyone on seeing them were to cast doubt on my assertion that they had come to Jamaica as a last resort to avoid death by consumption.

In Kingston and the other towns along the coast the temperature averages between 70 and 87 degrees, and the heat is almost invariably tempered by a breeze from the sea sooner or later in the day; while in the mountains many of the more ancient planters' dwellings are provided with fire-places. In such

houses I have myself found the glow of a fire made of fragrant cedar or pimento logs very grateful indeed; while on the Blue Mountain Peak I have seen the thermometer down to 40 degrees, in the screen five feet above the level of the ground.

Jamaica may well be called the land of perpetual summer. It is no exaggeration to say that on at least three hundred and fifty out of the three hundred and sixty-five days of the year the sun rises in a cloudless sky: that is in the lowlands at any rate. When there is rain it usually comes later in the day, except, perhaps during the October "seasons," and when about December or January a wet "norther" happens to drift down from the American continent.

There is a good story told in connection with this peculiarity of the weather, as follows:—The overseer of a certain sugar estate—or manager, as he is called in all other West Indian colonies—a hard-bitten old Scotchman, had sent out to him as an underling a youth from the Western Highlands, whose experience of fine mornings had necessarily been strictly limited. The weather had been for weeks unusually dry, and the "bushu," (as the negroes invariably call the overseer, or manager of any property) was becoming daily more anxious about the welfare of his young canes. Meeting his youthful countryman on his rounds one morning he was greeted with:

"Good morning, bushu."

"Good morning, Mr. MacEacharon."

"It's a fine morning, sir."

"Ah yes, it's a fine morning all right."

Two or three days afterwards a similar encounter took place—there having been no sign of any

change in the weather—at which the asperity of the busha's reply was very much more marked. The next day but one they met again for the third time, and the simple youth once more offered his salutation:

“Good morning, busha.”

“Good morning Mr. MacEacharon;” (very curtly indeed).

“It's a f——.”

“Aw man, tae hell wi' your fine morning; it's always a fine morning in this damn country.”

Jamaica is in many other respects a singularly blessed island; in its fertility, and its freedom from dangerous wild animals. The only creature which can be described as such is the alligator, (which is really a crocodile,) and it figures in the official coat-of-arms of the colony. There never were any venomous snakes; and now there are none at all. This is owing to their having been exterminated by the mongoose, which were imported from India for the purpose of destroying rats on the sugar estates. They have destroyed a host of other creatures, though, leaving most of the rats; and among them are the snakes. With regard to the alligators it is a curious circumstance, of which few people are aware, and none are able to explain, that while they abound in every river, delta and lagoon on the south side of the island, the north side is entirely free from them. As far as I know, only on two occasions have specimens been seen on the north, and on each just after a hurricane had swept the island from the south east.

The only really dangerous wild animal is the tick. He has no fear of man whatever; and he abounds chiefly in the dry—that is the tourist—sea-

son. He attaches himself without hesitation to the person of his victim, and is too small to be hunted or destroyed by means of firearms or lethal weapons of any sort. Short skirts and rudimentary sleeves have his entire approval.

Another peculiarity of the country is that the numerous products of nature which now form the chief substance of its export trade, and furnish food for its inhabitants, are, with scarcely any exception, exotics. The only indigenous ones are—I think I am correct in saying—first and foremost the pimento, which practically does not grow in any other country; the manioc or cassava, which formed the staple food of the aboriginal inhabitants, the Arawak Indians; the fustic tree; and the fruit known at this day as the neesberry, or naseberry; also perhaps, the starapple. Sugar-cane, logwood, coconuts, bananas, cacao, oranges, annatto; ginger, even the breadfruit and mangoes, which are now staple foods of the people, growing in extravagant abundance all over the island, and the very guinea-grass which carpets it from one end to the other, affording the very best feeding for horses and cattle: all were brought here from other countries, chiefly from the far east.

The explanation of the name “neesberry” mentioned above is that the fruit strongly resembles the medlar, which is very common in Spain, and the Spanish name of which is “nispero,” (accent on the first syllable). The Spaniards, seeing the fruit, and being at once struck with its resemblance to the medlar, promptly called it “nispero;” and the name has stuck in a slightly modified form. The fruit is not a berry, and “nees” or “nase” means nothing at all.

The present name appears to me to be undoubtedly a corruption of "nispero."

Another curious feature in the natural history of the island is that the coconut palm grows profusely all along the northern coast right down to the beach, and constitutes one of the chief beauties of the scenery. Along the south coast however, from White Horses westward, it is conspicuous by its absence, with exception of a few trees at Little Pedro Bay in St. Elizabeth, and Bluefields and Negril in Westmoreland. I am not aware whether there are any statistics available on the point, but from my knowledge of the country I estimate that the average temperature on the northside is several degrees lower than that of the south. I have certainly found orchids growing on the north at an elevation of six hundred feet which on the south I had never seen at less than two thousand.

Chapter IV.

THE PEOPLE.

The population of Jamaica was set down in the census of 1921 at 858,118, and the numbers are no longer officially catalogued in the *Handbook*, as they used to be in former days, according to colour, but merely divided into "males" and "females;" which is a sign of the times.

I think it is safe to say that at least eighty per cent. of this number are full-blooded negroes, or very near it, who thus constitute the great bulk of the population; and when I speak of "the people" it is those whom I have in mind, and chiefly the dwellers in the country parts where my experience lies; not more than four of my forty-seven years in the public service having been passed in Kingston. Kingston is a law unto itself, requiring special treatment; and I am a firm believer in the old maxim *ne sutor ultra crepidam*. Very little reflection will convince the intelligent observer that nearly all conditions, and especially that of the relations between the races, must of necessity be different in the capital of the island from those obtaining in the rural districts.

There has gradually crept into the English language a loose, improper, and slightly irritating meaning attaching to the word "native." Writers of all kinds use it in the sense that it applies only to the dark-skinned inhabitants of tropical, or other remote and uncivilised, or partially civilised countries. In

speaking of Europe or the United States they never describe the population as "natives." Jamaica has shared in this respect the same fate as every other country inhabited by a coloured population. People who write about the island forget—or they do not know—that it does not contain any aboriginal, autochthonous inhabitants. It did so when the Spaniards possessed themselves of it, but they lost no time in exterminating the aborigines. The present population is entirely exotic. I myself am a "native;" but I am certain that no writer on Jamaica would so designate me, for fear of conveying a false impression: to such an extent has the meaning of the word become distorted. It is now within measurable distance of being a synonym with "savage" or "heathen." It is a matter of unfailing astonishment to visitors to Jamaica to find that there is no race question here. We have not yet reached the stage where black and white inter-marry without exciting comment, but the old hard-and-fast colour distinctions of past generations are being rapidly and steadily wiped out. It is becoming increasingly difficult to tell where black leaves off and white begins. Every man whose heart is in the right place has an equal chance with his neighbour, no matter what the colour of his skin may be.

Attempts have been made in latter years to stir up race-prejudice. It was introduced into the politics of the country at elections, by two black men, at different times and places; and again by a coloured man, a pseudo-champion of the negro, who had proved the insincerity of his own protestations by marrying a white woman.

And quite recently renewed efforts in this direc-

tion have been made by an organisation calling itself the *Universal Negro Improvement Association*, with headquarters in the United States. In the year 1919 this Association used to distribute in this island an organ of the press printed in America and known as "The Negro World," the avowed object of which was to excite the hatred of black against white by inuendoes and lying calumnies of the vilest description.

The leaders of a certain church in this island, which consists exclusively of negroes—all honour to them—brought the importing of this paper to the notice of a gentleman who, himself of very dark complexion, is already high up in the judicial branch of government service, and will most assuredly rise higher still. He in his turn called the attention of the government to this pernicious publication, and the matter was referred to me for confidential enquiry and report; with the result that the paper ceased to be distributed. The reader will thus realise that I am speaking of that which I know.

I have not yet seen in print any indication of the lines along which these good people propose to improve the Universal Negro. Their only activities of which I have read are childish amusements, such as "The Crowning of the Queen of Sheba," "The Unveiling of a Chart," the holding of processions by members clad in gorgeous apparel, and the conferring by their leader of various high-sounding titles of nobility upon his disciples. I am afraid that they will be obliged to ascend to a higher plane if they expect to be taken seriously. Further, I would say that the reputed success of one of their ladies in making a fortune by inventing some process for taking the kink

out of negro hair does not point to that "pride of race" which is one of their watchwords. No: fortunately for the peace and prosperity of this little island we have among our black population too strong a leaven of sound common sense to be disturbed by such frothy ebullitions; and the backbone of our community consists of a class of "small settlers," as they are called, who have a stake in the country, and correspond to a great extent to the English yeomanry. They know in what direction their best interests lie; or, to put it vulgarly, on which side their bread is buttered. So the U.N.I.A. does not appear to make any such headway as to create apprehension.

In speaking of the people I do not propose to dilate upon their defects and shortcomings, with which my calling has naturally brought me into close and constant contact for nigh on fifty years, but to throw the light on to the other side of the picture by emphasizing their virtues, of which I have also had experience.

In judging them the fact should never be lost sight of that their ancestors of from four or five generations ago—or even less—were African savages who could not even speak the English language, and most of whom were actually cannibals. Cases do occasionally occur which reveal depravity of such an unspeakable nature as to point unmistakably to a savage racial origin; but for the most part we live in a well-ordered community, in which life and property are as safe as in any country in the world—and safer than in many which claim centuries of civilisation. Again: one should reflect on the awful lives most of them are compelled to lead, especially in the sugar manufac-

turing districts. Unable to read, often with no light but that of a fire in their one-roomed hovels, and devoid of any form of rational amusement, is it any wonder that after a day's hard toil they turn to such relaxation of a primitive and elemental description as nature provides, and as have been handed down to them by their forefathers?

When all is said and done, I maintain that their faults are in most cases more those of the head than of the heart; and I speak from my own experience when I say that once their respect, esteem and confidence have been won by strictly fair, impartial and consistent dealing, they can be handled as easily as so many children. Severity they do not mind, for they regard leniency as a sign of weakness; but one's word must be one's bond. They are very quick and keen judges of human nature; and as illustrating this they have a proverb—expressive, as most of their proverbs are—that runs thus:—"Duppy know who fe frighten." (A ghost knows whom he can frighten).

They are intensely loyal to the British Crown. The bogey of a desire for annexation to the United States, which is periodically trotted out—for political purposes no doubt—simply does not exist in reality. Among the older generation the name of Queen Victoria was always uttered with love and reverence. I remember the old cook of a friend with whom I was staying at the time of the Queen's death coming into the room where I was sitting, folding her hands over her abdomen—which is the attitude prescribed by etiquette—bobbing me a curtsy and saying:—"Please, Inspector, is it true I hear 'missis' Queen dead?" On my answering in the affirmative, she bob-

bed a second curtsey, then cast both her hands and eyes heavenward, which is the gesture of despair, and heaving a deep sigh, turned and left the room without another word. They all used to think that it was Queen Victoria herself who brought about the emancipation of the slaves.

It is no idle boast to say that a white woman could travel unprotected from one end of the island to the other without being molested—that is as far as the country parts are concerned. Just about the time when the Jamaica contingent of the British West Indies Regiment was returning to the island, there were symptoms of a lapse from this high standard of conduct; but these symptoms were exhibited by a few “lewd fellows of the baser sort” only, who had made the discovery while abroad that there were other white women in the world, of a totally different sort from the “buckra ladies” to whom they were accustomed in their own country. I think I am safe in saying that this was only a transient phase, which has now definitely passed away.

I can bear testimony to the fact that derelict white men, deserters from merchant ships, ex-convicts, and other waifs and strays, have constantly wandered up and down the island from end to end, doing practically nothing, and being supported and cherished by the hospitality of the blacks. Those used invariably to speak of their uninvited guests as “de poor buckra.” I remember once arousing deep resentment among some market women in Montego Bay by ordering the arrest of one of these vagrants whom I had known for years as a particularly worthless character..

Many of the negro girls dress very stylishly, and look uncommonly well in the latest European modes, with the erect and graceful carriage which is so frequent among them. The traditional coloured bandanna headkerchief is now as a rule only to be seen in the country parts, and then only on working days. It is instructive to note how quickly they respond to the dictates of fashion. If it decrees that waists are to be worn under the armpits, or in the umbilical region, the newest style immediately catches on. And the condition of nudity of the neck, shoulders, and arms which just now characterises women's dress, irrespective of weather conditions, seems particularly suitable to them.

Like most half-educated people, when they have learnt a little they imagine that they know a great deal. Most ludicrous are the attempts of those whose ambition lies towards converting the curious dialect which they speak into proper English. This they chiefly try to achieve by putting the vowels "a" and "o" in their proper places; and as the uneducated negro generally pronounces "o" as "ah," the effect is often grotesque. The negroes themselves call it "clipping the English." There is a story in this connection telling of a man who thus delivered himself to his servant: "Baai, look in de packet of my kawkee jacket, and bring me de bax of motch you see dere." (Boy, look in the pocket of my khaki jacket and bring me the box of matches you see there.) This I believe to be more or less apocryphal; but the following I myself heard once in court:

Resident Magistrate: "What did you do with the purse when he gave it to you."

Witness: "I put it in my fab, sir."

R.M.: "In your what?"

Witness: "In my fab, sir, in my fab;" (patting himself on the right side of the abdomen, in the region of the vermiform appendix).

R.M.: "Oh, I see; in your pocket."

Witness: "Yes, sir; in my packet."

(By "fab" he meant "fob.")

They are very emotional, and inclined to be hysterical, especially at periods of religious excitement. The line that divides the tear from the laugh is a very fine one indeed; and one who understands them can play on their feelings like a musical instrument. A broad joke uttered in the vernacular can change an attitude of threatening aspect into a friendly, or at least a neutral one, in a few seconds. Consequently they are easily led astray by unscrupulous "soap-box" orators, as the Americans call them, and men of the kind whom the editor of our daily paper has aptly described as "tin-pot" politicians. These charlatans covertly incite them to violence, but are very careful to render themselves conspicuous by their absence when armed police appear on the scene. Fortunately the mobs are easily cowed by a determined show of force. It should always be borne in mind that although under normal conditions there is no racial animosity in evidence, any riot which is not promptly and ruthlessly suppressed at once tends to develop into a race war: or rather, I should say, a class war; for the people of mixed race, and even the well-to-do negroes themselves, would in such an event fare no better at the hands of the mob—consisting as it does of the lowest and most dangerous elements of the

population—than the “buckra” who stands at the top of the social scale.

I make these observations on the strength of the utterances which I have myself repeatedly heard dropped by the mob element in various parts of the island at times of disturbance, and even of general calamity created by natural causes.

Another curious feature in the psychology of our people is the strange contradictions which manifest themselves. Their greatest curse is the tendency to petty theft, and especially to praedial larceny, or the pilfering of the unguarded provision fields. Yet it is a very common thing to see a basket or tray of eggs, cakes, fruit or vegetables exposed for sale on a little table at the entrance of a track leading to a dwelling some distance away—and sometimes not even within sight of the spot—without anybody near it. If you should desire to make a purchase in passing you will probably have to call several times before receiving a reply. Yet in all my long experience I do not remember ever having heard of anything being stolen under these conditions.

Again: another of their virtues is sobriety, the sight of a drunken man being extremely rare; yet they will run almost incredible risks and exercise the most marvellous cunning to steal rum from the sugar estates in crop time.

It should be stated that rum is regarded as indispensable at a funeral, at the cutting down of a cotton tree for the making of a canoe, or at a “digging match.” This last is a system of joint labour by which they assist each other in the preparation of their provision grounds for the planting season,

which falls at the same time of the year as the sugar crop on the estates.

As a rule the negro uses a stick or a stone to emphasize his arguments against an opponent when words have reached their limit, very rarely resorting to lethal weapons. But as soon as he becomes a soldier, he habitually carries a razor in his pocket, and uses it on very slight provocation; preferably on a policeman. A regrettable feature in this aspect of the conduct of the people generally is the fact that constant intercourse with the Spanish-American countries has resulted in bringing the revolver into fashion; and it is being used now-a-days with a frequency and recklessness that are becoming alarming. Another revelation of their curious trait of fundamental honesty is to be found in what happens every market day at every country post office in the island. Saturday is the great day for at least one member of each family from the country settlements to visit the market, be it in a town or a rural village, for the purpose of disposing of their produce and doing the shopping. She—for it practically always is a woman—is also commissioned to call at the post office and collect any letters that may have arrived addressed to her relatives and friends. The following dialogue then ensues between the messenger and the postmistress, to whom the former is most probably a total stranger:—

Messenger: "Please ma'am any letter for Jane Saunders?"

P.M.: (after a search in the pigeon-hole)—"No, none for Jane Saunders."

Messenger: "Any for Keturah Billings?"

P.M.: "Yes, here are two for Keturah Billings."

Messenger: "Any for Jochabed Brown?"

P.M.: "Yes, here is one."

And so it goes on; the postmistress delivering perhaps a score of letters to half-a-dozen women whom she has never seen before; and yet it is one of the rarest things for a letter to fail of reaching its destination. I don't pretend to say that it never happens; but when one watches the process and reflects, it is a tribute to the honesty of the people that it does not happen every day.

The heterogeneous character of the population is being further steadily complicated by the immigration in increasing number of Chinese, who almost invariably adopt the calling of retail shopkeepers. East Indians and Syrians we have had for many years, but they mostly live to themselves; while the Chinese cohabit more and more with the creole women, generally selecting those of a colour similar to their own. As the result of this a mixed race is being created, which will in the near future afford an interesting study in anthropology.

I believe it is now an accepted physiological fact that climate and environment have the effect of altering and modifying the physiognomy of races. I have read that in certain of the Western States the white Americans are beginning to acquire features of a distinctly Red Indian type. I am certain that some change of the same kind has been for a long time in progress in this country; for now the characteristic African type of face has almost entirely disappeared among the blacks. In my young days it used to be very common; but in these times one meets every day

scores of negroes whose features are almost entirely Caucasian in outline.

In the second year of the Great War, when recruits were called for by the Mother Country, Jamaica made a gallant response. The total number of men who enlisted was upwards of 11,000. A vastly greater number came forward; but, sad to relate, some seventy per cent. of them had to be turned down as physically unfit. Although employed chiefly as a labour corps, those who came into the fighting line acquitted themselves gallantly, notably on a certain occasion in Palestine. There was one platoon which consisted entirely of members of the police; and in connection with this I cannot omit the following story: After all the Jamaica contingent had returned home and been demobilized, I was one morning putting my men of the St. Elizabeth division through their annual musketry course on the range at Black River, and among them was one who had served in the war. To him I said, "Reid, what was the last place at which you fired a musketry course?"

"Jerusalem, Sir."

Think of it! For me that answer contained a complete epigram. Kipling's *Recessional* with its words "Lord of our far-flung battle line" came to my mind at once. Here was this simple-minded, loyal black policeman, doing his annual training as such in an obscure town in an obscure little West Indian island, who could tell me that the last place in which he had fired his musketry course was Jerusalem. For the remainder of that day my mind was filled with thoughts of the might and majesty of the British Empire. It fell to the lot of the various Inspectors of

Police to investigate and verify the claims made by the recruits for maintenance allowances to their dependents during their absence. I personally dealt with several hundreds of these; and many of them were curiosities indeed. Most of the men grossly exaggerated their earnings, and misnamed their respective callings; which I suppose was only a human weakness such as might be expected all over the world. I have however a very distinct recollection of one claim in which the recruit had described himself as an "electrician," although unable to sign his name. On enquiry I discovered that his claim to this designation was based on the fact that he had been usually employed by the Public Works Department to patrol the roads along which the telegraph lines ran, and trim away the branches of trees hanging over the road which threatened to come into contact with the wires. For ingenuity that would be hard to beat as the definition of an electrician.

Chapter V.

THE STORY.

I was born in Jamaica in June 1856, but was taken away from the island in 1861 at the age of five years, and did not return to it until I was nineteen. During this period I grew up and was educated in England and Germany; and I think I must have imbibed, being then at the most impressionable age, some of the thoroughness and attention to matters of detail which are so characteristic of the Germans. I certainly acquired a complete mastery of the German language. My school in England was in the north, in the county of Yorkshire. It was not as bad as Dickens's "Dotheboy's Hall," but in some respects it used to be a fair imitation of that celebrated institution. When I look back on some of my experiences there I feel convinced that if I had not been made of exceptionally robust material I should have died a very early death. The Spartan tone of the establishment may be imagined from the fact that it was regarded as a sign of effeminacy to wear underclothing of any sort, in winter or summer. In this respect I, a raw, callow fledgling from the tropics, conformed to the unwritten rule; and I continued the custom after I went to Germany, where the winters were much longer and more severe.

In December 1876 I received an appointment as Sub-Inspector in the Jamaica Constabulary Force, and reported myself at the depot, which was then at

the old military barracks in Spanish Town, the former capital of the island, on the 8th January 1877. The force was organised in 1866 and 67 by Sir John Peter Grant, who was appointed Governor of Jamaica to clean up the mess which had been left behind by the old form of government of the colony, culminating in the historic Morant Bay rebellion of 1865. It took the place of the old police force, which was one of the many rotten institutions abounding in Jamaica at the time. It was constituted as an armed force, on the general lines of the Royal Irish Constabulary; the officers being called Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors, while in the other ranks the purely military designations of corporal, sergeant, and sergeant-major were adopted. The Inspector General, Major J. H. Prenderville, was an ex-officer of the then recently disbanded 3rd West India Regiment; and there was among the other officers a sprinkling of men from the same corps.

We were armed with muzzle-loading rifles of the Snider pattern; and the shooting which we had to do might aptly be called purely theoretical, as we had no rifle ranges. After spending three months undergoing instruction in Spanish Town, I was put through an examination, as the result of which I was pronounced fit to be transferred to Kingston, the capital of the island, for practical duty. The Kingston to which I came in April 1877, was a totally different place from the Kingston of the present day. The streets were unlighted, and most of them were in bad condition, with pits of varying size and depth in the gutters, usually covered with very odoriferous green slime. I got to know some of those pits very

intimately in the course of succeeding years, and when some of them disappeared during the progress of improvements in the sanitary conditions, I almost felt the sense of loss of old friends.

The thoroughfare known as Gold Street, in particular, was nothing better than a gully paved with cobble-stones, along which no vehicle was ever known to venture, and it appeared to serve no other purpose than to carry down to the sea the storm waters discharged from the upper portions of the town. There was a good deal of rain in May 1877, and I have many a time had to cross Gold Street at midnight and in the small hours of the morning, while visiting the beats, through rushing water that reached to my knees.

There were no tram-cars on the streets. The only public vehicles were the "busses;" not the luxurious equipages of the present day, which have inherited the name, but flat trays on springs, having at each of the four corners a post supporting a flat roof, and seating accommodation for three persons besides the driver. This latter was, as often as not, an impudent, foul-mouthed ruffian, whose personal appearance and manners were quite in keeping with the ramshackle condition of his whole turn-out.

The race course to the north of the town was generally a wilderness of bush, standing waist-high in some parts, with numerous foot-tracks leading across it in different directions, which it was not safe to traverse after dark. It was cleaned up once every year, in preparation for the one race meeting which used to be held for three days in the second week of December. There were no railings or protection of

any sort, and no permanent grand stand. This was only temporarily erected a few days prior to the races and afterwards removed; and the road past the racecourse ran between it and the track. The police had to keep the track by sheer physical force, with the aid of a few temporary posts and a stout cable at the entrance. As the direct result of this arrangement I had the narrowest escape from death which I have ever experienced, in the last race of the last day of the 1879 meeting. Six horses, immediately after being started, bolted with one accord and rode me down at the entrance, pinning me down to the ground with my own horse and three of the racehorses, with their riders, on top of me. When I was extricated from the mess, the crowd which had gathered to view the corpse gasped with astonishment when I arose and shook off the dust, practically unhurt. There were several casualties among the bystanders though. One curious feature about this annual race meeting was the sudden springing up of a village in the central portion of the racecourse: a village built of coconut limbs and bamboos, bits of packing-cases and kerosene tins. The population consisted of the very dregs of Kingston and lower St. Andrew; who amused themselves by gambling and vice and debauchery of all kinds to the accompaniment of drum-beating all night, while the races lasted. It was not safe for the police to enter this locality at nights except in groups. As soon as the races were over the village disappeared as suddenly as it had sprung up.

In those times there was no ice factory in Kingston. The entire supply of ice used to be imported from the United States in fast schooners; and the

depot was at the foot of Duke Street, adjoining the Royal Mail Company's wharf. The price was two-pence a pound in Kingston as a rule, and in Spanish Town, thirteen miles away, threepence. The negroes from the country parts usually handled and looked at it with curiosity not unmixed with awe and reverence; and there were many stories current about women and children who had been commissioned to buy and bring home ice on market days being unable to account for its disappearance on returning to their homes many miles away—with disastrous results. On one occasion a wealthy lady residing in Spanish Town gave a picnic on the banks of the Rio Cobre, for which she provided a large block of ice. This she entrusted to a servant, with strict injunctions to deposit it in a very cool place. Fortunately for the picnic party the hostess not long afterwards noticed that the ice had vanished; and on making enquiry she discovered that the servant had carefully placed it in the river itself, as being the coolest place he could think of.

In those days the railway, which was owned by a private company, extended no further than Old Harbour, some twenty-five miles from Kingston, with a branch of about four miles running up to a place called Angel's, to the northwest of Spanish Town. There were no telegraph stations in the country except along the line of railway; and the postage on letters to England and to other West India islands was one shilling for half an ounce.

There used to be some curiously original characters about Kingston in those days. One was a man, whose name I never learnt; but who was wont to celebrate every event of public interest in doggerel

verse, which was printed and circulated along the streets. I have a distinct recollection of two of this person's effusions. On one occasion a case came on for trial at the Kingston Circuit Court—which will receive further mention later—of a white man at Old Harbour Bay who was charged with murder, he having shot dead a black man of the district, which bore a very bad reputation for ruffianism—and does so to this day. The circumstances of the case were proved at the trial to be that the white man, whose name was Milne, fired the shot in defence of his wife, whom the negro was at the moment attacking with an axe, and the accused was acquitted. I remember very distinctly two lines of the ballad in which this occurrence was described by the poet. They ran thus:

“He did not care one single dam,
But shot the negro down.”

On another occasion the police invoked the attention of his Muse, with unpleasant results to at least one of his readers. It had occurred to the then Inspector General to alter and improve the system of street duty in Kingston by dividing the officers and men into three reliefs, each of which did night duty for fourteen consecutive nights from 9 p.m., to 5 a.m., then seven days day duty and then back again to the fourteen nights. The result of the carrying out of this brilliant idea was that the sick list was increased by seventy-five per cent.; to say nothing of other unpleasant concomitants; and through the efforts of our own medical officer (the father of the present head of the Kingston hospital) this impossible situation was brought to the notice of the Governor, who peremptorily put an end to it. But to this day I have a

vivid recollection of the dreary tramping the streets of Kingston through the long hours of the night, hearing hour after hour strike on the parish church clock and crawling home, hollow and red-eyed, at five o'clock in the morning. Well: our poet described the conditions of this episode with a certain amount of wit, and not altogether undeserved sarcasm, in the following lines:

“The sleeping constables at night
They snore like the rolling waves;
Patrolling street for fourteen nights
Will send them to their graves.”

It became a common practice of certain “lewd fellows of the baser sort” to sing this quatrain to a waltz tune which was much in vogue at that time; and one day one of these had the effrontery to warble it while passing the front of the station in Sutton Street, where a certain corporal, an ex-soldier of the 3rd West India Regiment, and a good boxer, happened to be standing in the gateway. This corporal appeared to take no notice of the singer; but when the latter had passed on and turned up a quiet lane about a hundred yards away, he followed softly behind, overtook him in an isolated spot, and administered with his fists such punishment as he thought the occasion called for; and all so quickly and quietly that no alarm was raised by any passer by.

There used also to wander about the streets and lanes an elderly man of fine physique, with a full beard and moustache—most unusual thing for a negro—iron gray in colour, whose occupation seemed to be the examination of the people’s rubbish heaps, to see what he could find in them. He was invariably

dressed in the remains of an old battered top hat, and a frock coat that had seen better days. In his conversation he always expressed himself in very choice and correct English, with a refined accent; and as he tramped along he used frequently to sing, in a full, resonant baritone:

“Great privilege in England
For the negro boy.”

He told me that he had been taken to England as a small boy by his employer, and had grown up in that country; afterwards going to sea, and finally drifting back to his native land. He was evidently slightly off his balance, mentally, though quite harmless; but his intelligence was as much of a high order as his physique was striking. Another waif and stray who had run ashore here was a quaint little wizened Englishman who had married a black woman of the town. He followed the calling of a grinder of knives and scissors; and he used to perambulate the streets day by day, pushing along his orthodox knife-grinder's outfit on wheels, with the little grindstone worked by a pedal, and all the necessary auxiliary tools. He was of a taciturn and reserved disposition; but he did excellent work. I feel sure that the housekeepers of the present day would be glad to see a successor to him.

The great event of 1877 was the inauguration of the lighting of the streets of Kingston by means of gas lamps, on the 10th May. After a couple of preliminary rehearsals in certain circumscribed localities, the general grand illumination took place between eight and nine p.m., on the date named. The Acting Governor, drove down from King's House four-in-

hand; and on his arrival at the Parade every gas-jet burst into flame amid the cheers of the assembled populace. I remember that one of the horses ridden by the Governor's escort of police orderlies became quite unmanageable, by reason of the noise and excitement, and a nasty accident to the rider was the result. What is now the Parade Gardens was then a sandy waste which had very recently been railed in for the purpose of being converted into a garden. On the northern gate of this, facing Upper King Street, a very elaborate illumination had been installed, consisting of numerous tiny gas-jets forming the letters V.R. surmounted by the royal crown. (It must be remembered that this was during the reign of Queen Victoria.) The interpretation of this device circulated among the lower orders was that it signified "Verley and Robinson," a firm of bakers whose business was a household word in Kingston and the adjacent parishes at that time and for many years afterwards. There was a dockyard and a hospital at Port Royal in those days, and a receiving ship moored in the harbour there. It was the headquarters of the Jamaica Division of the North American and West Indian squadron of the British navy, which used to pay a visit to Kingston regularly in the early part of every year, and occasionally visit other ports as well. There was a commodore living on shore at Port Royal, and the mess on board the old hulk "Urgent" which succeeded the "Aboukir" a receiving ship, numbered some twelve or fourteen members. There was a great deal more hard drinking then than there is now; and as the majority of these numerous officers had very little work to do, their energies, I regret to

say, had a tendency to concentrate on the consumption of alcohol. I used to have charge of the Port Royal Police station, which necessitated a visit to that place two or three times a week; and I must confess to having witnessed, and indeed abetted, in some weird and wonderful performances, in the small hours of the morning especially, both on the "Urgent" and other occasional ships, and at the naval club on shore. It was a common colloquialism to speak of ships as being "long" or "short" ones; the description being regulated by the intervals which were respectively allowed to elapse between the drinks consumed. But be that as it may, most people in the island had in those days some opportunity of seeing the white ensign; whereas now-a-days there are thousands upon thousands who have never beheld it.

That year 1877 became fraught with grim tragedy before the end of the summer, for the naval and military people at Port Royal, at Up Park Camp, and even at Newcastle and other places on the hills; and, saddest of all, at King's House, the residence of the Governor, which was then occupied by Mr. E. E. Rushworth the Colonial Secretary, who was acting as Governor during the absence on leave of Sir Anthony Musgrave. The cause was an outbreak of the terrible yellow fever, which has been referred to in a previous chapter. It ravaged chiefly the white garrison. Officers and men, women and children, old people and young men, went down before it like corn before the reaper. As above mentioned, the most cruel tragedy of all took place at King's House. There had come out from Oxford for the long vacation the son of the wife of the Colonial Secretary by a former

marriage, a fine lad, in the first flush of manhood. He took the fever first, and his young life was cut off. The next victim was his half-sister, his mother's child by his stepfather. Then, last of all, Mr. Rushworth himself died. Well do I remember bidding farewell to Mrs. Rushworth on the deck of the steamer which was to take her home, a lone and childless widow.

I recollect another visitation of yellow fever some eleven years later; it was sad enough, but it did not work anything like the havoc of the 1877 epidemic.

Chapter VI.

THE STORY.—CONTINUED.

The judicial system of the island was in those days different from the present one, especially where the circuit courts, (which correspond to the English assizes,) were concerned. Instead of a circuit court in the chief town of each parish with exception of St. Andrew as at present, there were only five held throughout the whole island, and at these cases were tried from several parishes and portions of parishes together. The jurors were also drawn from the parishes concerned; and these periodical gatherings used to resolve themselves into very important social functions, sometimes lasting for several days, to the great advantage and gratification of the lodging-house keepers and purveyors of necessaries of all kinds in the towns which were fortunate enough to be the seats of these courts.

Thus, the Kingston Court embraced St. Andrew and St. Catherine, as well as portions of St. Mary, Portland and St. Thomas; and it was naturally the largest and most important of all.

One of the occupants of the Supreme Court bench was a very unique character, whose name was a household word throughout the country, and whose memory is cherished to this day by those who knew him. A terror to evildoers in his judicial capacity, his manners towards all other persons were a model of delightful old-fashioned courtesy; while the polish-

ed flow of his speech, especially when charging a jury, was a pleasure to listen to. His enunciation was just slightly marred by a certain impediment or hesitation which caused him frequently to interlard it with what sounded like "erb-erb-erb" before passing from one word to another. This was a very marked feature, even in his private conversation; and it seemed in a way so characteristic of the man.

I have a most distinct recollection of one particular Kingston Circuit Court over which he presided: I think it was in May or June 1878. The calendar was an immensely heavy one, including, *inter alia*, no fewer than three cases of murder, and one of highway robbery. One of the murders was that mentioned in the previous chapter in connection with the Kingston poet.

Another was one which had been committed eight years previously in the parish of St. Mary; and the same defendant who was now sent up for trial had been arrested and charged at the time, but released for lack of sufficient evidence. The police of the parish had however been most persistent and untiring in their search for further evidence. This had been found, with the result that the accused was now sent up to take his trial before a jury. I think I am correct in saying that the number of witnesses brought for prosecution and defence amounted to between fifty and sixty; so that this case alone represented a very large amount of work for the court. It was taken during the first week of the session, and lasted two whole days, from 10 a.m., until dark. On the first day, as the case was not yet completed, the jurors were accommodated for the night at the pub-

lic expense in a lodging-house known as "Blundell Hall," under supervision of a police guard, of whom I was in charge. On the second day, all the proceedings having been got through, and there being nothing left but for the jury to consider their verdict, they were locked up for the night in the courthouse—again under my charge—where they were supplied with the bare necessities of life, but no bedding.

It was a very red-eyed and dishevelled group of twelve men that I delivered into the hands of the Registrar of the Court on the third morning. After the judge had taken his seat, on being called upon for the verdict, the foreman announced that the jury could not agree, and that there was no prospect of their ever agreeing. It was therefore decided to postpone the case until the following week for a fresh jury to be empanelled. It came on in due course before a different jury; and all the wearisome and tedious details had to be gone through afresh. As before, the case lasted two whole days and nights, while exactly the same treatment was accorded to the second jury as to the first one. On the third morning the verdict was awaited in breathless silence by a packed court; and there was quite a sensation when the foreman announced it as "not guilty."

The judge looked at the foreman through his spectacles with a piercing glance for a couple of seconds, threw himself back in his chair, and after turning himself in the seat from one side to another, delivered himself thus:—"Erb-erb-erb,—Gentlemen of the jury, that the verdict at which you have arrived is the result of the most careful and conscientious deliberation on your part I have not the slightest doubt,

but, gentlemen, I regret to say that I do not concur in it. (I omit the frequent "erb-erb-erb" with which the address was interspersed.)

"That the prisoner, Grant, is the murderer of the man Morrison has been as clearly proved as any case ever was in a court of justice. Gentlemen, by your act, you have let loose upon Her Majesty's liege subjects in a quiet and peaceful district a rampant savage with the instincts of a wild beast; and that in the course of time he will again exercise those instincts you can take my word for it. Gentlemen you are discharged." The whole Court sat open-mouthed during the delivery of this scathing denunciation, which I think I have reproduced word for word. Indeed, I have so often repeated it, from that date onwards through upwards of forty years that it has become indelibly engraved on a naturally accurate and retentive memory. And the old gentleman's words were prophetic too; for I afterwards learnt that the "rampant savage" was some four years later tried and convicted on a charge of felonious wounding, and actually died in the penitentiary.

One of the great secrets of this judge's power was the terse and drastic manner in which he was wont to deliver sentence on habitual criminals and on persons convicted of offences dangerous to the public welfare; and to deal with prevaricating and dishonest witnesses. He never talked "over their heads" or wasted words in futile admonitions, as so many of his successors have been in the habit of doing.

In the case of highway robbery mentioned above as being on the calendar for this same court the accused had waylaid the money messenger of one of

the coffee plantations in the Blue Mountains on a lonely hill road, pulled him off his mule, stunning him with a cudgel, and carried off the whole week's wages of the labourers. Fortunately his assailant was known to the messenger; a hue and cry was raised, and the police of the district took up the scent red-hot, with the result that the robber was captured and all the money recovered before he had had time to get rid of any of it. The evidence was so conclusive that the jury returned a verdict of guilty without leaving the box; and this is how the sentence was pronounced:

"Prisoner at the bar, the jury have found you guilty on the clearest possible evidence of this atrocious crime. Highway robbery is a thing that cannot be tolerated in this country for a moment. Twenty years penal servitude.

The whole court gasped; and the prisoner, a powerfully built and intelligent looking black man of about twenty-five, was dumb with pained astonishment. But it was many a long year before the offence of highway robbery again occurred in Jamaica; with one exception, which will later be described in due course, but in which the robbers were not Jamaicans, but Cubans.

The name of the culprit in this case was Esau McGann, and there can be no doubt that he was another "rampant savage with the instincts of a wild beast," judging by his subsequent history, which happened to fall within my purview.

He served fifteen of his twenty years' sentence, and was granted a pardon in 1893 by Sir Henry Blake, who was then Governor. Immediately on his release he bent his steps eastward from Kingston to the par-

ish of St. Thomas, where I was then stationed; passed through Morant Bay and strolled on up the Blue Mountain Valley on a Saturday afternoon, "seeking whom he might devour." It so happened that he found a victim in the person of a nursemaid from my own house, who had got leave for the week end to visit her parents at a village in the same direction. On her, a girl of about fourteen, he made a vicious and determined assault of a criminal nature; but she was fortunate enough to attract the attention of some passers-by, who came to her rescue, and escorted her to her home. McGann escaped, but by means of rousing the whole parish I succeeded in effecting his arrest early on the following Monday. He was duly examined and committed for trial at the Morant Bay Circuit Court to be held in October; the new judicial system having come into operation some five years previously. Being sent to Spanish Town for safe custody in the interval, he contrived to escape from the escort that was bringing him back to Morant Bay for trial the day before the Circuit Court. It was at night, in a thickly wooded part of the road; and his escape was facilitated by bad weather and swollen rivers. He seemed to have made his way thence northwards into the parish of St. Mary, which he knew well as a lad. By a strange coincidence, the carrier of the mails between Richmond and Castleton in that parish, who travelled on foot by an unfrequented road in the early hours of the morning, was found dead by the roadside the next day but one after McGann's escape, and the mail bags cut open and rifled of their contents. McGann was seen in the neighbourhood on the same day, but no evidence could be procured to connect him with this crime. However he

was hunted high and low throughout the country, and finally arrested by a very smart young constable in a railway train near Spanish Town, sent back again for trial at the next Morant Bay Circuit Court, and sentenced to three years penal servitude.

I have heard that on his release he emigrated to Central America and became quite a respectable member of the community in one of those republics. I can never think of the judge who is described in this chapter without remembering his perfectly delightful old-world courtesy and consideration towards all of us officers of the constabulary, not excepting even a boy like myself. It forms such a contrast to the demeanour of other judicial functionaries of later days, some of whom seemed to take pleasure in addressing us in open court as if we were schoolboys or grooms. One particularly offensive specimen of this type actually amused himself by trying to put me in the pillory, and turn me into ridicule, in the circuit court on one occasion, in the presence of my subordinates and that of the assembled public: and this when I was over sixty years of age and had had forty-two years service. But it has very often been my experience to find the *mens parva in corpore parvo*, as in this case.

The finest object lesson which the dear old gentleman ever gave in my hearing of his knack of hitting the nail on the head and getting rid of superfluous matter was during the trial of a desperate prisoner from the penitentiary for wounding and nearly killing a warder. The accused pleaded not guilty, although the evidence was of the most clear and direct nature, there being a score of witnesses of the occurrence, consisting of warders and

other convicts. He insisted, further, on having some five or six of the worst ruffians in the prison brought as witnesses for the defence. The accused was not represented by counsel; and when the first of these witnesses went into the box he simply said "yes" or "no" to leading questions put by the accused, the apparent object being to pretend that the warder it was who had made a savage attack on the accused instead of the other way about. The whole proceeding was so absurd that the Crown Prosecutor declined to enter into the farce of cross-examination. However, one very conscientious jurymen rose in his seat and intimated that he wished to ask the witness a question. The judge looked at him with an expression of amazement and disgust on his countenance, threw down his pen, leant back in his chair, and simply said: "Erb-erb Mr. Jurymen, really! erb-really!" On which the jurymen instantly sat down and never uttered a word. I have never since seen any well-intentioned effort so suddenly and effectually nipped in the bud.

I remember two remarkable cases of suicide which occurred about this period. One was that of an Englishman who held an appointment as superintendent in the Public Works Department. He had married a Jamaica lady to whom he was deeply attached, and she had died quite young. The bereavement appeared to prey upon his mind very seriously, to such an extent as to cause apprehension among his friends. One Monday morning I, being then in charge of the Kingston Detective Office, was summoned to his house; and there in his bathroom we beheld a melancholy spectacle. (I should mention that the unfortun-

ate man and his wife had been very fond of going out together for rides on horseback in the evenings.)

There, hanging by the neck on a hemp rope, one end of which was fastened to a beam that stretched across the room, swung the corpse, naked to the waist, around which was fastened his wife's riding habit, so tightly knotted and twisted that it was with great difficulty that we untied it; and when we succeeded in doing so there was a deep and livid indentation left on the skin. On the concrete floor of the bathroom lay a low, wooden, three-legged stool on which the deceased had evidently stood while adjusting the noose around his neck, and then kicked aside at the crucial moment. It was immediately under his feet; and alongside of it lay his wife's riding whip. The drop was not higher than about eighteen inches; and the post mortem examination revealed that death had been caused by strangulation. There was displayed a marvellous degree of grim determination on the part of the deceased; and the whole tragic event created a profound sensation, on account of his social position.

In the other case the victim of his own act was one of the numerous Haytian refugees who used to frequent Kingston about this time, seeking shelter under the British flag during the constantly recurring revolutions in their misgoverned country. One never saw any of them doing any work. They spent the whole day and part of the night walking along the streets in the lower part of the town, or sitting in taverns and restaurants of the humblest description talking politics to the accompaniment of violent gesticulation; and they were invariably clothed in black frock coats and top hats. Occasionally one of them would make his ap-

pearance in a suit of spotless white for a day or two, but that was an exception. Their prevailing colour was very dark.

One day we received from a certain member of this community a report that his gold watch and chain had been stolen by one of his compatriots. On investigation the evidence seemed very clear; so a warrant was obtained for the arrest of the alleged thief, who was a certain General A—N—(It used to be a common saying about that time—and, I believe a perfectly true one—that the Haytian army contained more officers than privates). Naturally a real live General would expect his arrest on a criminal charge to be surrounded by rather more pomp and circumstance than that of an ordinary individual; so I myself proceeded to effect it, accompanied by two detectives, and armed with the warrant. We found the General at a very humble lodging in East Street; a lean and cadaverous-looking black man, with unusually large eyes, dressed in his black frock coat. He received us with dignified courtesy, and he understood sufficient English to realise what our errand was. With a stately bow he expressed his entire willingness to accompany us, merely asking permission to retire to his bedroom for a moment to put away some of his belongings. This I, unwisely, allowed him to do alone. He entered the adjoining room, closing the door after him, and I could hear him moving about for a minute or so. Then I heard a most peculiar choking sound, and a noise as of something hard striking the floor; after which all was still. I immediately flung the door open, entered the room, and beheld a very ghastly sight on the little iron cot which formed the General's bed. He

had taken off his coat, collar, and necktie, rolled up his shirt-sleeves, seized his razor and cut his throat from ear to ear, besides inflicting two terrible gashes on the anterior surface of each arm just at the elbow joint. He was stretched out on his back on the cot, with both arms hanging over the edge of it; while the open razor was lying on the floor in the blood which was streaming out over both rooms.

There could not be any question of the fact that he preferred death to dishonour. The Haytians were not the only political refugees who sought safety in Jamaica at that time. Cuba was in a chronic state of rebellion against Spanish injustice and tyranny, and there was a steady influx of Cubans into this island. Many of their descendants are still with us, as loyal British subjects. They brought with them a thorough knowledge of the cultivation of tobacco and the manufacture of cigars and cigarettes, which now forms one of the leading industries of the island. In the parishes of St. Andrew, St. Catherine and Upper Clarendon they planted large tracts of hitherto neglected land with tobacco; and in the various cigar factories in Kingston Spanish was practically the only language spoken.

Two of these Cubans at least introduced into the country an innovation in the perpetration of crime, within my own experience. I was stationed for a time in the village of Linstead, thirteen miles from Spanish Town, in the interior; a place which has since developed into a large and flourishing township and trade centre. There were three or four sugar estates in the neighbourhood, which used to draw the money for the weekly payment of their labourers from merchants in

the village, usually on a Friday morning. Wakefield, which was the name of one of these sugar estates, always sent two East Indian coolies, on foot, for their money, the distance being only about five miles. The road, however, led through a settlement where a number of Cuban tobacco planters resided. On a certain Friday morning the two coolies started on their homeward journey at about ten o'clock, carrying a bag containing just a few shillings short of £100, nearly all in silver.

At about 11 o'clock one of the two coolies came running in hot haste to the station, and reported that while passing through the Cuban settlement above mentioned two men whose faces were hidden under black masks had rushed out at them from a clump of bush, attacked them with sticks and knocked both of them down, the bearer of the money bag being rendered unconscious; that the two robbers had taken the bag and run away with it, leaving the coolies lying on the ground. After waiting a few minutes the stunned man had recovered consciousness, and hastened on to report the occurrence at the estate, while the other returned to Linstead to alarm the police. I instantly dispatched the whole of my small available force to the scene of the outrage and followed them myself.

There had been a very heavy dew during the night, which rendered the tracks made by the robbers in the "wire" grass with which the whole district was grown very plain indeed; and after about two hours' search we found the bag intact in the back yard of a house inhabited by two Cubans, and recovered every penny of the money. We also found the masks, and the very heavy freshly cut green sticks which the robbers

had used as weapons. Their boots and trousers were soaking wet with the dew. The evidence against them was very strong, although their faces had been concealed by the masks, made of black cloth; and they were duly committed for trial at the next Kingston Circuit Court.

Now, at this time there was still in existence in this island an exceedingly archaic statute known as the *Law de Medietate Linguae*, the purport of which was that in the case of any alien being arraigned for trial before a jury on a criminal charge such alien was entitled to demand that a certain proportion of the jury should consist of aliens. I do not remember the exact proportion, but I know that through the efforts of counsel for the defence there were no fewer than five Cubans on the jury which tried these two men. They paid little or no attention to the evidence; and I saw myself two of them fast asleep in their seats while the case was proceeding. The result was that the jury could not arrive at a verdict; and this being the last case on the calendar it had to be adjourned to the next ensuing court. Before that date the Attorney General brought in a bill before the Legislative Council, which met during the interval, abolishing the trial *de medietate linguae*, on the strength of the obvious miscarriage of justice which might have taken place in this case; so that when the two culprits again appeared before the court they were tried just in the same manner as if they had been British subjects. They were found guilty without any hesitation on the part of the jury; and, if my recollections serves me right, they each received a sentence of ten years penal servitude.

A good story occurs to me in connection with a

man who kept a large shop or "store" as it is called in Jamaica—in the village of Linstead. He was entirely a self-made man, and had not enjoyed the advantage of a good education; but he was a justice of the peace and a person of importance in the community. He purchased a derelict property in the district called A—the name being that of a place in Scotland at which exist very well preserved remains of an ancient Roman encampment. One day a Scotch friend of mine, with a very keen sense of humour, asked him whether he had found any traces of a Roman encampment yet on his recently bought property. The answer he received was this:—

"N—n—no; I haven't found any yet; but you know I haven't half finished cleaning up the bush." This was said quite seriously and in perfect good faith.

Chapter VII.

THE STORY.—CONTINUED.

In the year 1879 I was transferred from Kingston to be stationed in the village of Chapelton in the upper part of the parish of Clarendon, for the purpose of superintending the stations in that then remote and barbarous district. The headquarters of the division were at May Pen, on the main road between Mandeville and Old Harbour; and it was not until many years later that they were transferred to the hill station of Chapelton itself, where they are now.

The railway ceased at Old Harbour, and I had to pursue my journey thence for some twenty-four miles to my destination by buggy. There was no hotel or lodging house; nor were there any quarters for an officer; that was the way in which we used to be chucked out into the cold world in those days. I found accommodation of very inferior description in the house of a brown lady whose English husband was employed as a foreman on the railway extension works which had recently been begun. He used to be absent from home five or six days a week; and although she had a baby to play propriety, my position was obviously rather a delicate one. In fact it soon became impossible. The room which I occupied was of such dimensions that in one direction I was able to touch both walls at the same time with my outstretched arms; while in the other there was a space of about three feet to spare. I was ultimately rescued through the kindness of a Scotch

gentleman and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Craig. He was the leading man in the community; and these kindly people insisted on my removing my belongings to their house and taking up my quarters in the bachelor's bungalow which formed part of their premises. I may say here that Scotch people have been my best friends all through my life.

At that time the parish of Clarendon enjoyed a most unenviable reputation for murders and other crimes of violence, and ruffianism generally.

It is an indisputable psychological fact that the moral and intellectual level of the negro is to be found at its very lowest on and about the sugar estates of the island; and the chief industry of Clarendon in those days was the production of sugar. Even nowadays one frequently meets people in the vicinity of the estates in the sugar districts whom it is difficult to regard as human beings. There were at the time of which I speak two brutal murders hanging like a cloud over the parish, the perpetrators of which had not yet been discovered. The first was known as the Scully murder; the victim having been a white lad of that name who had been waylaid while carrying home money to the estate of which his father was the manager, dragged off his mule, done to death, and robbed. No person had ever been arrested on suspicion of being concerned in the foul deed; and even in my time, which was some seven years afterwards, the police of the parish were being blamed for neglect and incapacity in dealing with the case. Young Scully's father was quite broken-hearted over his boy's death. He never allowed his hair to be cut again; and I met him in later years with a luxuriant growth flowing over his shoulders, all sil-

ver-grey. Nothing was ever discovered in connection with that murder, in spite of a £200 reward offered by government.

The other was known as the Morris Hall murder; and it was in connection with this that I won my spurs. It had occurred six years prior to my going to Chapelton, at a place called Morris Hall, some five miles distant. A man and his wife of the name of Bailey had been arrested at the time, but discharged for want of evidence; and for six years a reward of £100 had been offered by the government for the detection of the murderers, without result. The deceased in this case was a young black woman who had been staying with the Baileys, and had accompanied them to a dance at a neighbouring house on a certain Friday night. On the following morning her dead body was found on the ground in front of the Baileys' house with the throat cut.

About three weeks after my arrival at Chapelton, I received late one night an urgent message from my sergeant-major asking me to come to the station immediately on most important business. On entering the station I saw along with the constables a short, squat, elderly black man, apparently in a state of great mental perturbation. He was an African born, brought to Jamaica as a lad, having been rescued from a slaver in the Caribbean sea by a British cruiser on the voyage to Cuba.

There used formerly to be in certain parts of the island whole settlements peopled by Africans who had found their way here in a similar manner. Their descendants can now scarcely be distinguished from the rest of the population.

I looked this man over very carefully, put him through a course of preliminary questioning, and then asked him what he had come to tell me. Trembling with emotion, large drops of sweat glistening on his face, which was now the colour of very dark ashes, he told, slowly and deliberately and without hesitation, the following remarkable story:—

He began by saying that he knew who had killed the young woman at Morris Hall, and had known it for six years. On my putting to him the obvious question why he had concealed it for so long, he said that it was because he was afraid of being sent to prison himself for what he had been doing on the night of the murder; and also because Obeah had been put upon him to keep his mouth shut; but that his conscience would not allow him now to keep the secret any longer, and he was determined to make a clean breast of it, no matter what the consequences might be. He then proceeded to state that on the Friday night when the murder took place he had been engaged in stealing logwood on the Morris Hall property: that is actually felling the standing trees; a thing that used frequently to be done in the wastes of jungle which covered large areas on properties in that district, and which he had been in the habit of doing without detection. It was a brilliant moonlight night; and there was a footpath near by where he was working leading through the logwood thicket from the direction of the Baileys' house towards another one in which he knew that a dance was being given that night. At an hour which he guessed to be about two o'clock in the morning he heard voices and saw figures on the footpath. Concealing himself behind a large logwood tree he saw a man and

a woman whom he knew well coming along the path carrying something heavy between them, which he recognised as a female human form. Waiting until they had gone some distance ahead, he followed them through the bush until they arrived at the house of the Baileys, where, right before the front door, they laid down their burden, and passed on. After waiting a few minutes he went to the spot very cautiously and found to his horror that what had been deposited there, was the dead body of a young black woman whose throat had been cut from ear to ear. Stuck point downwards into the earth alongside the body was a common black-handled table knife, stained with blood. My informant went on to say that while viewing this ghastly scene he heard a rustling in the bush at the back of the house, and saw coming towards him the man who had been carrying the body, on which he fled for dear life, but not before he had been recognised by the man, who called out his name. He then told me that the man was Thomas Brown, and the woman who had been helping him to carry the corpse was Eliza Morgan, who were at that time living together according to the custom of the country, and were well known to him.

On hearing this gruesome story I subjected the narrator to the most rigid cross-examination in every direction I could think of, but without shaking his evidence in the slightest degree. He knelt before me and kissed my feet, then lifted his eyes and his hands to heaven, swearing the most solemn oaths that what he had said was the whole truth, and praying that he might be struck dead on the spot if it was not. He unbosomed all the details of his logwood stealing en-

terprises by the light of the moon, and again vowed that his conscience could not bear the burden any longer, and that he was quite ready to face the penalties of the law and the terrors of Obeah in preference. Eventually he completely convinced me of the truth of his story; and I decided that it was a case in which the promptest action was an immediate necessity. I found that the old man knew where Thomas Brown and Eliza Morgan, who had parted company some few months after the murder, were living at that moment; and I took the drastic step of having them arrested at once. My sergeant-major and detective—the latter a man of giant frame, and a perfect terror to the criminal class—were very keen about it; so I sent one of them in one direction, and the other in another, each accompanied by a couple of men, with orders to take Brown and Morgan out of their beds, or wherever they might find them, and bring them to the station. I dispatched them shortly before midnight, it being a fine, dry, moonlight night; and about five o'clock in the morning I was awakened by the report that my orders had been carried out without a hitch. I had of course caused the accuser to be detained at the station in the meantime.

Owing to the length of time which had elapsed since the committal of the crime it was not an easy task to resuscitate and piece together such evidence as had been forthcoming at the inquest on the murdered woman. It will be remembered that the Baileys had been arrested at the time, but very soon discharged from custody. I found them to be quite decent and respectable people; and they proved exceedingly useful to me in sorting out and procuring evidence of

quite a new character which was brought forth in the light of the little African's confession. The Clerk of Petty Sessions, who was in those days the functionary charged with conduct of such preliminary proceedings, old Mr. Matthew Farquharson, (grandfather of our lady tennis champion), considered the evidence which I was able to offer quite sufficient to detain the two accused; and he remanded them in custody week by week, while at each appearance we were able to forge one or two additional links in the chain of circumstantial evidence which had to be obtained in support of that of the eye-witness. I may say that the little African never deviated a hair's breadth from the story which he told me on that first night. I recollect that among the very original and unique features of the evidence adduced was the finding in a grave of a blood-stained flannel shirt, identified as having been the property of the prisoner Morgan. The whole case was surrounded by a dense atmosphere of Obeah. I cannot now remember all the details; and it is possible that they might bore the reader; so it will suffice to say that when I left Chapelton at the end of November 1879 to return to Kingston, Thomas Brown and Eliza Morgan, after having been three months in custody, had been duly committed to take their trial at the Mandeville Circuit Court, to be held in January 1880—if I remember rightly—on the charge of murder. The result was that the jury acquitted Eliza Morgan, but brought in a verdict of guilty against Thomas Brown, who in due course met his death on the gallows. I had at that time, as will presently appear, been appointed to the temporary command of the St. Andrew division, the Inspector of

which had gone on leave, and was consequently stationed at Halfway Tree. But on me the government laid the responsibility of distributing the reward of £100, which, as stated above, had been offered for the detection and conviction of the murderers. I apportioned the lion's share to the little African, who had been the moving spirit in the affair, and the bulk of the remainder to the Baileys; having in view the facts that they had rendered most useful and important aid, and that they had at the very outset been arrested and kept in custody for several days, charged with a crime of which they were entirely innocent.

There is a sequel to this story, and it illustrates in a very striking manner that child-like simplicity and absence of all vindictiveness, which form such strong redeeming features in the psychology of our people in the rural districts. About two years after the events above narrated I was again sent to Clarendon; but this time in charge of the whole parish, with my headquarters at May Pen. On my way home one day towards dusk, after a hot and tiring ride to Chapelton and adjacent districts, I heard a woman's voice calling out:—"Marning Inspector Thomas" (I may say that the actual time of day has no connection whatever with a salutation of this kind).

"Marning, Inspector Thomas."

I could not at first distinguish where the voice came from, as it appeared to be above me; but when the cry was repeated once more I glanced upwards, and there on a hillside overhanging the road I beheld a buxom young black woman standing at the doorway of a neat little house, with her two hands placed on her abdomen, one over the other—that being the

attitude which etiquette prescribes for a curtsy—bobbing up and down, with her white teeth exposed in a smile of delighted welcome.

I at once replied to her greeting in the vernacular, (of which I am a master), asking her who she was and how she came to know who I was—being at the time in mufti.

To my utter astonishment I received the answer:—

“No me 'Liza Morgan, sah? I really glad fe see you looking so well.”

Here was a woman whom I had had locked up for three long months, and done my best to hang, over two years previously, and whom I had last seen in a cell at the Chapelton station committed for trial on a charge of murder, greeting me with expressions of genuine pleasure at this chance encounter. There was no hypocrisy about it; for if she had not called my attention to herself I should not have even seen her on the hillside sheer above the road as she was. There are many countries where a woman of other nationality in her position would have seized the opportunity of laying me out with a stone, as I rode past, all unsuspecting.

*Chapter VIII.*THE STORY,—*Continued.*

In the year 1880, I was for ten months in command of the police of St. Andrew during the absence on leave of the Inspector for that parish. The most notable event of that year was the visit paid to the island by two Royal Princes, namely our present King, His Majesty George V, and his elder brother, Prince Albert Victor, who later became Duke of Clarence, and died in early manhood. They arrived in the cruiser "Bacchante," in which ship they held the rank of midshipmen. The Governor, Sir Anthony Musgrave, was away on leave at the time, his place being filled by the Lieutenant Governor, Mr. (afterwards Sir,) Edward Newton. He entertained Their Royal Highnesses at King's House for a week or ten days, and I was in constant attendance there myself, being *persona grata* with Mr. Newton, and having my headquarters at Half-way Tree, within a very short distance of King's House. On one afternoon a cricket match took place at Up-Park Camp between the garrison and the "Bacchante," at which the Princes were present, and which of course hundreds of people flocked to see. I remember that the military had not made any arrangements for keeping the ground clear, and that this duty devolved entirely on myself. I performed it to the best of my ability by riding round and round as in a circus ring; but the ring grew narrower and narrower, until at last there was no longer

sufficient room for the players, and the match had to be left unfinished. I ought to say that there were no fences or barriers of any description; and in those days "boundaries" at cricket had not yet come into use; so that there was not even an artificial line marked out around the field.

On two subsequent occasions did His Most Gracious Majesty visit this island. He returned in January 1884, as a lieutenant in H.M.S. "Canada," on which occasion a subscription ball in his honour was held in the old King's House at Spanish Town.

Again in 1891, being then in command of H.M.S. "Thrush," a gunboat belonging to the North American and West Indian squadron, which in those days used to make an annual cruise in these waters, he landed in royal state as Prince George of Wales to open the Jamaica Exhibition, on the 29th January. On that occasion, I had the honour of riding as one of his escort, close to the off hind wheel of his carriage, from the upper part of Duke Street to King's House. He was entertained by Sir Henry Blake, who was then Governor, for ten days, during which time three balls were given, at all of which I was in attendance. Another notable event of 1880, but of an unpleasant nature, was a disastrous hurricane which struck the island from the southeast on the night of the 18th August, passing diagonally across it to the northwest and doing heavy damage as far as St. Ann's Bay. There was great destruction in Kingston. Trees were blown down along the road to Half-way Tree, where houses were few and far between, in such numbers that the mule-drawn street cars, which had by that time been established, were unable to run for many days afterwards. I happened to have come

down into Kingston on the 18th, and next morning I was obliged to find my way back to my quarters at Half-way Tree on foot. There had not been a real hurricane for many years previously, and most people had forgotten what it was like. We have had many painful reminders since then.

In the following year, 1881, I was removed to Linstead, to supervise the stations in the upper part of St. Catherine, subject to the orders of the Inspector for the parish, who resided in Spanish Town. Some of the districts round about were in an exceedingly benighted condition. I have in a previous chapter described a case of highway robbery which occurred in that neighbourhood; but during my stay there I had some of the quaintest experiences which have ever fallen to my lot, of which the following is the most amusing, in spite of the element of tragedy involved.

One of the stations within my purview was in a wild locality called Point Hill, which in those days might have been described as a bit of "Darkest Africa." It was many miles from everywhere, and could scarcely be reached from any direction, except on horseback. It boasted, however, a claim to be regarded as civilised in the fact that it actually possessed a resident District Medical Officer. When I came to know this gentleman, I at once realised that he was just the kind of person whom the government would have appointed to such a place, because they could not possibly have sent him to any highly civilised one. It has always been a mystery to me how such a person could ever have obtained the necessary qualifications of a medical practitioner. He was a white man, a Canadian; and it was said that

he owed the appointment to the influence of a brother who occupied a good position in the judicial department. He was the butt and the prey of the negroes living about him. They only consulted him professionally for the most trivial ailments; and they used openly to ride his horses, and plunder his provision ground. The first time I saw him, he was walking along the road past the station in his shirt-sleeves, bare-footed, with a white helmet on his head, a machette in one hand and a small bundle of sugar cane on his shoulder. I received a severe shock when the corporal in charge of the station told me, in reply to my question, that he was the District Medical Officer. I subsequently discovered that whenever he had to attend a court, or to go to Spanish Town or Linstead for any purpose, he used to wear a rusty black frock coat, and a top hat that matched it in appearance. He is thus described at length for the reason that he so fitted in with the other characters engaged in the case I am about to narrate.

One fine day there came to me at Linstead two wild-looking women from this Point Hill district with a weird story of infanticide committed on three different occasions by a man and a woman residing in their neighbourhood. They stated that the parties mentioned had been living together for some three years, during which time the woman had borne three children; and that each of these children had suddenly mysteriously disappeared when a few months old. An accident had led to discovery of the fact that the last one had been buried at the root of a bread-fruit tree, growing on the border of the land on which the two women lived. As their story appeared to be reliable, and careful enquiry failed to reveal

any motive on their part, the necessary investigations were undertaken; and there, sure enough, at the root of the breadfruit tree we unearthed the bones of three infants of tender years, one set of which appeared to have been comparatively recently interred. The man and the woman were arrested and sent on to Spanish Town. There was no record of any registration of birth or death of any children at all having been made by these persons; and, as always happens in such cases, as soon as the arrest had been effected, plenty of corroborative evidence was forthcoming from the people living in the neighbourhood. The bones were of course submitted to the D.M.O. above described for examination; and I recollect to this day how he positively swelled up with a sense of his own importance, and the pompous verbosity with which he described the results of his examination. The prisoners were duly committed for trial at the Kingston Circuit Court; but under the judicial system then in vogue the Coroner for the parish decided that an inquest should be held on the bones, he, the Coroner, having nothing to do—as he would have under the present system—with the examination of the criminal charge against the parties implicated.

The coroner appointed as his deputy a certain solicitor, a man of low intelligence and poor education, who never appeared in a court, but made his living by doing a certain amount of rudimentary chamber practice, and acting as coroner's deputy when occasion called. The place appointed for the holding of the inquest was a small house on a property called Aylmer's which was used as a courthouse once in every two months.

The jury consisted of labourers working on a neighbouring sugar estate, and the headman of the estate was the foreman of it, he and one other being the only two men who could read and write. Then there was in attendance, of course, the D.M.O. who has been described, wearing, as befitted such a solemn occasion, his frock coat and top hat. Such a gathering for judicial purposes I have never seen, before or since.

The man and the woman who were charged with the murder of the children were not in attendance, they having been already committed for trial by another authority.

The court having been duly opened, the deputy coroner explained to the jury that they were assembled for the purpose of enquiring whether the bones were those of certain unnamed infants, and whether these infants had come to their death by foul means or otherwise.

All the evidence was heard, and then, having summed it up, the deputy coroner directed the jury to consider their verdict, on the lines previously indicated. After a few minutes of rather excited and indignant consultation the foreman stood up and thus delivered the verdict: "We find the prisoner at the bar guilty of murder."

It was then explained to them that there was no prisoner at the bar for them to try; but that all they were called upon to do was to pronounce upon the bones, their previous instructions being carefully repeated to them. Once more they retired in consultation; and presently the foreman delivered an amended verdict as follows:—"We find that the bones *was* the bones of the said children, and that they came to

their death by having their birth concealed." This verdict, the purport of which, though crudely expressed, was quite intelligible, the deputy coroner had to accept.

As a matter of fact, the jury at the trial of the two accused found them guilty of the offence of concealment of birth.

*Chapter IX.*THE STORY,—*Continued.*

For some three years, between 1881 and 1884, I was shifted about from one parish to another, holding acting appointments in Clarendon, Hanover and Manchester; then returning to Kingston for Sub-Inspector's duty. In July of the latter year I was sent to Morant Bay to relieve the Inspector for St. Thomas, who had obtained six months leave. Owing to certain circumstances which were not discovered until after his departure he was precluded from returning to duty; and at the expiration of his leave a vacancy was thus created which should in the ordinary course of things, have brought about my promotion to the rank of Inspector, I being then the senior Sub. But just at this juncture I experienced the first taste of the ill luck which has dogged my footsteps ever since. A Commission which had been sent out from England in 1883 to report on the financial condition of the colony had, among other things, recommended that the number of the officers of the Constabulary should be reduced by one at the next opportunity, so that my promotion had to be deferred until another vacancy occurred. This did not happen until nearly three years later; and when it did arrive, I had been over ten years a Sub-Inspector.

Shortly after I took charge of St. Thomas in 1884, a new form of government was introduced in Jamaica; changing it from a Crown colony pure and

simple, and inaugurating a partially elected Legislative Council; the system which, with several amendments and extensions, continues to the present day.

The introduction of this change was, for some reason or the other, watched with a great deal of anxiety on the part of the authorities. A large number of "confidential" instructions were issued to the police; and, among other precautionary measures, no member of the force was allowed to have leave, except on medical certificate, during the week in which the elections took place. However, everything went off without symptoms of disturbance of any kind; and I have no doubt the government felt that a great crisis had been safely passed.

The parish of St. Thomas had been in bad repute throughout the island ever since the events of the rebellion of 1865; and on taking up my duties there I found still living three or four survivors of the massacres which took place at the Morant Bay courthouse and other places in the parish during that rebellion. Two of them were medical men, whose lives had been deliberately spared by the rebels on account of their profession. They had some gruesome stories to tell.

I remained in charge of St. Thomas from July 1884, until November of the following year; and I subsequently returned to the parish on promotion in 1887, staying until January 1894. I thus spent altogether upwards of eight years there; and I make bold to think that I succeeded in proving that the bad reputation of the parish above referred to was quite undeserved. I am proud to say that I won the respect, the esteem, and the confidence of the population in

such a way that for years after I had bidden farewell to the parish I used to receive occasional letters and Christmas cards from numerous persons of the humblest classes.

While serving there I had some of the most unique and interesting experiences of my whole career, some of which I will here set down. I ought to say that it had apparently been the policy of the government for some years to make the parish a dumping ground for officials whom they regarded as being a little below the mark of desirability, socially or otherwise; although I am vain enough to think that I was not sent there for any such reasons. One of the District Medical Officers of the parish was an American, a refugee from the United States who had served in the ranks of the Confederate army during the Civil War. It used to be understood that there was a price on his head.

Another was a man who had arrived in the island as an army surgeon some forty years previously; since which date he had never left it: nor, I think, had he ever opened a medical work. His practice, such as it was, lay chiefly in the bush of the Blue Mountains; and on me devolved, in later years, the unpleasant duty of bringing about his retirement from the service altogether.

Sugar cultivation, more or less moribund, was carried on in a desultory fashion at the east end of the parish—which is the east end of the island—over the magnificent alluvial plain known as the Plantain Garden River district; but it was being steadily ousted by the banana, through the enterprise of an American firm to whom Jamaica owes a debt of gratitude which can never be repaid.

I made the acquaintance of that firm in its humble beginnings as "Baker and Co.," watched it expand into "The Boston Fruit Company," and have lived to see it develop into the gigantic commercial concern which is now known as "The United Fruit Company." I have had official and private dealings with them in all those stages; and I gladly bear testimony to the benefits they have conferred on this British colony. Americans generally, rightly or wrongly, do not enjoy a very good reputation for their modes of dealing with the coloured element in their own country; but in Jamaica the manner in which the United Fruit Co. succeed in extracting from their coloured employees the good service that they do, forms a curious and interesting psychological study.

In the year 1884 the government first introduced the experiment of importing a shipload of Chinese coolies from Hong Kong as indentured labourers on the sugar estates, instead of the East Indians, as had always been the practice for over forty years. The whole business was badly managed from the outset; there was not even anything like an adequate staff of interpreters; and one Chinaman was so very like another that the immigration authorities could not for some time sort them out for allotment to the various estates. Some seven hundred of them landed, and considerably more than half were sent to St. Thomas, by coasting vessels, or "droghers" as they are called in Jamaica. Many of them were cunning and unscrupulous ruffians—probably ex-pirates—and on board one of these droghers, beating up for Port Morant, the detachment rose in rebellion, and putting the captain in fear of his life, compelled him to put his

boat about and make for Kingston. The captain, however, had the good sense to run into Yallahs Bay, which was then on his lee, and slip ashore in his dinghy to the police station, from which a telegram was sent to me at Morant Bay, on receipt of which I took what action I deemed necessary.

When these Chinese were all eventually landed and dispatched to their various estates, chaos and confusion ensued. They did not take long to find out that all the employees on the estates were mortally afraid of them, and could not distinguish one from another. Taking full advantage of this, they refused to work, although the rations prescribed by the regulations were duly issued to them by the estates. In some cases they actually made raids on the provision grounds of the negroes and on the canefields.

The situation called for drastic measures, and I applied them—as usual entirely on my own responsibility—giving some of the worst characters a slight taste of the kind of treatment that would have been meted out to them in China, with the result that in about three weeks, work was proceeding smoothly on all the estates. My men entered into the spirit of the campaign with great gusto; but we all had a strenuous time. In some other parishes these Chinese deserted in batches, assisted by their countrymen in Kingston; and on one property in St. Mary matters culminated in a riot in which one Chinaman was killed.

But I was very proud of the fact that owing to my drastic measures out of the three hundred and sixty or thereabouts who had been imported into St. Thomas, only some eight or nine were unaccounted for up

to the time I left the parish, after the lapse of sixteen months.

An interesting case of murder occurred in the year 1885 among these same Chinese on an estate called Lysson's, about three miles from Morant Bay. One of them had been missing from the property for some days, and it was assumed that he had deserted; when one morning, on a gang being turned into one of the canefields for the purpose of cleaning it, they came upon a corpse in a ghastly state of decomposition. Only the skull with the hair still attached to it revealed the fact that the remains were those of a Chinaman. They must have been lying there for at least two weeks. There is no place in the tropics so fearfully hot, or affording such effectual concealment, as the heart of a canefield in full growth.

The medical examination of the body revealed that there was a fracture at the base of the skull, probably caused by a blow with some heavy, blunt instrument; and leaving the rest of the carcass to be buried, the doctor took the head away with him to be properly cleaned and examined. The clothing found at the spot was identified by the wife of the missing Chinaman. Our enquiries furnished no clue at first; which, in view of the language difficulty, was not surprising; but late that evening we learnt that another Chinese labourer, named Com Fook, had disappeared from the estate. I made a very thorough search of Com Fook's room and the effects which he had left behind; and what I found there prompted me at once to set the telegraph going to Kingston and other adjacent parishes for the arrest of Com Fook. The Immigration Department also sent a fully qualified interpreter at my request, one whom they had recently

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brought all the way from Demerara; and with his aid a good deal of evidence was obtained. It was all purely circumstantial; but, as the event proved, it was sufficient. Then, some ten days later, Com Fook himself was brought back in custody, having been arrested through the vigilance and intelligence of a smart young constable stationed at Cross Roads, a place which is an exceedingly busy thoroughfare on the outskirts of Kingston. My theory of the case was that Com Fook had followed the deceased into the canefield and there dealt him a terrific blow from behind with the head of his hoe. The skull, nicely washed and disinfected, was produced by the doctor; and there was the fracture, in the very thickest part of it, plainly to be seen. The only difficulty was to discover a motive for the murder; but that difficulty disappeared under the intelligent handling of my interpreter. He ascertained that some two weeks previous to the finding of the body, Com Fook and the deceased—whose name I have forgotten—had had a furious quarrel over the gambling table, in the course of which deceased had called Com Fook a “loasen pig”—as the interpreter put it, meaning a “roasting pig”—and that Com Fook had then and there sworn to kill the other at the earliest opportunity. A curious light is thrown on the psychology of the Chinaman by the fact that all the Chinese who were present at the time, and indeed, all those on the estate, were quite well aware of this, and were not in the least surprised when Com Fook carried his threat into execution.

The case was tried in the Circuit Court at Bath, where all the cases from eastern St. Thomas and Portland used to be sent in those days.

The evidence was entirely circumstantial; and, with exception of the overseer of the estate, the doctor, the arresting constable and myself, all the witnesses were Chinese, who could scarcely speak a word of English. The jury found a verdict of guilty; and Com Fook was duly executed in Spanish Town, after making full confession of his guilt. The only thing that he could not understand was why he had been "tried so often," as he put it, instead of only once. What he meant was that he had been present at an inquest—which, as stated in the previous chapter, used always to be held in such cases at that time—and at the investigation by the committing magistrate, as well as at the Circuit Court where he was finally dealt with. I trust I may be pardoned for mentioning that Mr. Justice Charles Ribton Curran, who presided at the trial, introduced into his summing up some remarks regarding the way in which the case had been got up which were of a nature most gratifying to myself.

I may also say, incidentally, that the interpreter, a man of fine presence, and highly intelligent, wound up by marrying the widow of the murdered man, and taking her with him on his return to Demerara.

It was in St. Thomas that I came across the most determined and persistent law-breaker that I ever knew. His name was Bennett; a man of gentle demeanour, very quiet, civil, and soft-spoken. There exists, as an auxiliary to the regular police, a force of rural constables, who wear no uniform, and do no constant police work, but only don a particular kind of distinctive badge when called upon to perform police duties, for which they are paid *pro re nata*. Bennett had been appointed to a post of this description on the recommendation of his employer,

who was a J.P., and a large proprietor; and in that capacity he was one day sent to arrest a Chinese labourer on the estate on a charge of larceny of canes, or sugar, I forget which. The Chinaman made some show of resistance, whereupon Bennett administered to him with his staff—quite a formidable weapon—such a beating that the Chinaman was ordered to hospital as a patient instead of being tried for the offence charged against him. Bennett was then put on his trial for unlawful wounding, and sentenced by the court to six months hard labour; which naturally involved his dismissal from the rural police. Having served his term, he returned to the estate, and was again taken on by his employer—who, by the way, invariably exhibited great sympathy for him throughout his career, up to a certain point, which will be described later. Before Bennett had been back a month, by a remarkable coincidence, the very Chinaman on whose account he had suffered the imprisonment was seized with a mysterious illness, necessitating his removal to the hospital; where, after lingering in a comatose condition for upwards of three weeks, he gave up the ghost. His illness was certified by the D.M.O. as “opium poisoning;” but knowing, as I do, the manner in which that hospital was run, I have my own opinion of the case. However, as I did not happen to be in the parish just at that juncture I had no official connection with it. I was sent back there in time to witness the finish of Bennett’s career.

His next exploit was the stealing of a watch from a Chinese labourer on the estate adjoining the one on which he was employed. The watch was a fairly valuable one; and the case being proved to the hilt,

a sentence of nine months hard labour was passed on him.

Not long after he returned from prison on this occasion an attempt was made to poison the rice which had been cooked for eating by the same Chinaman from whom Bennett had stolen the watch, and two others who lived in the same room. We arrested Bennett on suspicion, and presented a case sufficiently clear to commit him for trial at the Circuit Court, which as the new system had come into force, was to be held at Morant Bay, for the St. Thomas cases only. His employer stood bail for him, and brought down counsel from Kingston to defend him. This gentleman played so cleverly on the hostility to the Chinese which was general throughout the parish, that he succeeded in obtaining from the jury a verdict of acquittal; which was, beyond all doubt, a gross miscarriage of justice. The presiding judge gave an unmistakable indication of his own opinion of the verdict by remarking to the prisoner on discharging him: "You are a very lucky man."

After this episode Bennett lay low for several months, and nothing was heard of him. Then, one day my detective came to me and told me that he had received an invitation from Bennett to attend his wedding at the Golden Grove church on a certain day some four weeks later, the bride elect being a widow woman of substance, keeping a shop in the Golden Grove village, which adjoins the property on which Bennett was employed. The detective, who was a very fine character, said:

"You know, sir, Bennett does not belong to this parish; he comes from my own district of the parish of St. Mary; and, as you know, I have just returned

from leave there, and I know Bennett has a wife alive. I saw her only a week ago." At the same time he showed me the invitation which he had received to Bennett's wedding. By the next post I wrote the incumbent of the Golden Grove church, informing him of the facts, and warning him against allowing himself to be entrapped into aiding and abetting the crime of bigamy. I was then informed that the clergyman had sent for Bennett, who, on being confronted with my letter, did not attempt to deny that his wife was still alive. The detective, who was keeping track of the case, reported to me that Bennett had written a circular to all the invited guests to the effect that the wedding had been unavoidably postponed, but that it would certainly take place within a few weeks, on a date of which they would be notified in due course.

About a week later, I was returning in my buggy from Kingston, where I had been spending a couple of days, to Morant Bay, when at a sharp turn in the road, about two miles out, between six and seven in the morning I met Bennett riding a good-looking horse, the appearance of which was not unfamiliar to me. It certainly was not the sort of animal that Bennett or any man of his class would own. The man gave me a furtive glance out of the corner of his eye and rode on towards Kingston; and on following him with my eyes it struck me that the horse had evidently been ridden far and fast. The spot was about forty-two miles from Bennett's home; but it did not occur to me at the moment that the nearest way to his district of St. Mary would be through Kingston.

On arriving at Morant Bay I found a telegram awaiting me from the sergeant at Golden Grove

station reporting that a big bay horse was missing from the estate of Bennett's employer that morning, and that Bennett had been met during the previous night riding it along the road; also that a warrant had been issued for his arrest. Kingston and St. Mary were at once duly warned by wire; and on the following day I received a telegram from St. Mary calling for the arrest of Bennett on the charge of attempting to administer poison to his wife. This information was at once passed on to the police stations in Bennett's district of St. Thomas; and on the third morning after my encounter with him on the Kingston road, one of my men stationed at Bath while going for an early morning plunge in the river near the station caught him sneaking along the bank through unfrequented tracks, on foot, on his way homeward.

We afterwards learnt that the horse was found crawling along the road somewhere in the vicinity of Spanish Town, and taken to the pound, where it died.

Bennett was in due course examined and committed for trial: at the Morant Bay Circuit Court for horse-stealing, and at the Port Maria Court for attempting to poison his wife. The same judge presided at both courts, which were held within a week of each other, and he inflicted sentences of seventeen years penal servitude altogether: fourteen for the latter offence, and three for the former. It is hardly necessary to say that by stealing the horse Bennett had trespassed just a little too far on the indulgence of his employer, and did not receive any assistance from him on this occasion.

During my stay in St. Thomas, I engaged in a vigorous campaign against the Obeah superstition,

with great success as far as the individual prosecutions went, one case in particular being of a most unique and remarkable nature; but, sad to relate, it is becoming every day more evident that the effect of convictions under the Obeah Law is of an exceedingly evanescent nature; and that this foul superstition is strengthening its hold on the country. However, my experiences in this direction will be dealt with and the whole subject discussed in the chapter devoted to it. In the year 1888, a law was passed with the view of protecting the children of the peasantry from the mutilation of their arms and hands which used very frequently to occur to them while assisting in the working of the small wooden sugar mills that they use for grinding canes for the manufacture of the coarse, dark, and very sweet sugar which they commonly use. These mills are operated by horses or mules which tramp round and round in a circle, revolving the rollers by means of cogs, the whole thing being constructed of wood. The mangling of a hand or an arm used to be a very common accident among the children of a former generation, through being crushed by the rollers. This new law prescribed that certain protective appliances should be placed on these mills whenever they were being worked; also that no one should work his mill at all without its having been inspected by a member of the police force and certified by the Inspector of Police as being constructed according to law.

The then Inspector General of Police, Major L. F. Knollys, C.M.G.—a man who is still remembered with affection by those of his subordinates who knew him—intimated to me that he would be greatly pleased if the officers could make it possible to do the inspec-

tion of these mills themselves; and the suggestion appealed very strongly to my natural proclivities for exploration and adventure. I undertook the work *con amore*, much to the astonishment of my own men, and of the population generally, especially of the rural police, whose duty it was to guide me to the remote mountain fastnesses where these mills were often located; and altogether I inspected in the course of four or five months, upwards of four hundred of them. I ranged from the sea-coast up to 3,000 feet above sea-level, in the higher regions of the Blue Mountains, generally amid exquisitely beautiful scenery, and often with magnificent views lying at my feet; drinking in the cool mountain breezes and listening to the eternal murmur of rushing streams. In several places where I made a sudden appearance I came upon groups of stark naked black picaninnies who fled screaming with terror at the sight of me; but at every mill I found pleasant, peaceful and contented people, who received me with the greatest politeness and respect, and invariably offered me such hospitality as they could afford.

Many a day I have gone without any refreshment from early morning until dusk other than the fruit, canejuice, and "sugar-and-water" provided—without payment of any kind be it understood—by these kindly folk. Being a past master of the vernacular, it was very rarely that I did not leave the groups which used to gather at the mills on my approach roaring with laughter at some joke dropped by me suitable to the occasion. It was in the discharge of these duties that I gained the knowledge of the parish and established the pleasant relations with

the people to which allusion has been made in the early part of this chapter.

I owned at the time an exceedingly clever and sagacious horse, who often used to carry me safely over places where my rural policemen were afraid to ride their mules. And it was a remarkable thing that always when negotiating a particularly nasty bit, he was wont to amuse himself by biting off great mouthfuls of the luscious guinea grass growing along the sides of the narrow and precipitous tracks. I was forced to the conclusion that it was a piece of deliberate "swank" on his part. He became quite a celebrated character in the parish. On one occasion, in order to convince some scoffing friends who tried to belittle his performances, I rode him up the brick steps leading to the front door upstairs of the Morant Bay court house and down again. And this was after he had carried me some thirty-odd miles on the same day.

It was while in St. Thomas also that, overcome by the lure of our grand and beautiful mountains, I undertook the series of explorations which are described and recorded in a small volume entitled, "Untrodden Jamaica," which I published in 1891. These included the crossing of the John Crow Mountain range at the north-east corner of the island, where no human foot had previously stepped, in an expedition which took nine days to traverse a distance of fifteen miles as the crow flies. On all these explorations I was accompanied by a band of black men of St. Thomas, consisting chiefly of rural police; and I can never speak in too high praise of their loyalty, devotion, and cheerful endurance of hardship. I never heard a grumble or a wry word

pass among them. They were Nature's gentlemen, all; and some of them were among those who used to write and send me Christmas cards after I left the parish. I feel quite justified in saying that they simply worshipped me.

Through the influence which I thus obtained over these good folk I was able to induce some half-dozen families of them to migrate temporarily to Kingston for the Exhibition of 1891, to live in the model industrial village erected there, and give exhibitions of their mode of sugar-making and various other characteristic handicrafts; in spite of the wild rumours which were deterring the peasantry in other places from attending the Exhibition at all.

*Chapter X.*THE STORY,—*Continued.*

I was transferred in 1894 to the parish of Trelawny; which, as previously mentioned, was so named after a former Governor of the island, a Cornishman; the chief town being appropriately called Falmouth. It used in the bygone days to be a very important centre of the sugar industry, and the town of Falmouth bore the traces of departed splendour. Practically all the houses were built of solid hewn limestone; while the courthouse was, and still is, the finest building of the kind in the island. Unfortunately it has recently been gutted by fire. An interesting feature in the economic history of the parish is that after cane sugar had been killed by competition with bounty-fed German beet, and ceased to pay its way, most of the estates were able to survive and carry on by reason of the peculiar flavour of their rum, which was in great demand in Germany: a clear case of poetic justice. A German firm in Kingston used to have in their regular employ a couple of Teutonic "rum-smellers," as they were called, whose business it was to test the spirit manufactured on the various estates and purchase the crop according to flavour; not infrequently at an advance of four or five times the price of the ordinary rum distilled in other parts of the island. I do not know enough of the subject to pronounce an authoritative opinion; but it used to be held that the peculiar flavour of the Trelawny rum was due to some quality inherent in the soil. But

I do know that it took a very strong stomach to swallow it in its unmodified condition. I also know that on one estate at least in a distant parish a distiller from Trelawny was imported, and the entire Trelawny process was adopted with the view of producing Trelawny rum; and that the only result achieved was entirely to ruin the flavour of that which had always previously been manufactured on that particular property, and considered to be very good for common rum. The peculiar tang about the Trelawny spirit caused it to be commonly called "German rum"; and I may say from personal knowledge of the Teutonic rum-smellers mentioned above that if they had confined their activities to *smelling* only there might have been more of them alive at the time of the outbreak of the great war; one of the effects of which was the death of the "German rum" trade. I spent four years and a half very pleasantly in Trelawny; having no very serious or important criminal cases to deal with—rum-smuggling being the principal offence—and enjoying many varied kinds of diversion for my leisure time.

I did a great deal of boating—both sailing and rowing—in the harbour and for some three miles up the lowest reach of the beautiful Martha Brae river; I and my boys becoming very expert sailors. (This training was destined to stand the two eldest in good stead in later years.) I had also excellent shooting, cricket, golf, and tennis; and besides outdoor sports I was able to give full play to my artistic and literary tastes. I gave concerts and theatricals in the fine old town hall, which were always well attended; and even organised a small troupe of entertainers with whom I travelled as far as Brown's Town in St. Ann; one mem-

ber of my troupe being the present Custos of Trelawny. Out of the proceeds of these entertainments I was able to complete the purchase of a piano for the courthouse, which was under my care, and the key of which I kept until I left the parish. Thus life passed very pleasantly at my quarters in the old military compound, with the sea on three sides, and my sub-officers and men housed in the big barracks some fifty yards away. But even there I had one of the many extraordinary and unique adventures which, as the readers of this book will be bound to admit, have followed me all through life. It was as follows:—Some time in 1898 a man named P—was transferred to my division from Kingston. He had been a detective, but reverted to ordinary duty in consequence of some transgression committed by him. I did not like this; for it is usually the first irretrievable step on the downward path in the career of a detective. But on the man's arrival I found him to be a tall, fine-looking, well-set up young fellow, of light brown complexion, well spoken, intelligent, and very mannerly. I took a liking to him at once and so did my wife, as well as my children with whom he was constantly playing when off duty. He also found great favour in the eyes of my Irish sergeant-major, being always cheerful, civil and willing. All went well until the night of the 31st December, when the sergeant-major, who was in charge of a patrol in the town square, which is about a furlong from the barracks, noticed that something was wrong with him and ordered him back to barracks between 8 and 9 p.m. It was a very bright moonlight night; and as I myself was wending my way towards the square through the deserted streets—the whole population being concentrated

in the square—I suddenly came upon P. walking at a furious pace, taking immense strides, and dragging his feet along the ground behind him. He was going in the direction of the barracks, and he passed me like a flash. I called to him, but he took no notice; so I went on into the town to enquire of the sergeant-major, who informed me that P. appeared to him to have been drinking. I told him of my encounter with P., and said that we had better leave him alone for the present to sleep it off. I remained in and about the town until nearly a quarter to twelve, and then went back towards the barracks, the streets being quite deserted, while the watch-night services were in full swing in all the churches. When I arrived within fifty yards of the barrack gate, the large wings of which were barred and locked on the inside, I saw the small wicket in one of them open, and a man come out whom I did not recognise, until he arrived within a few yards of me. I then saw that it was P. and calling him by name I asked him where he was going to. Without uttering a word he leapt towards me like a wild beast, stooped down and clasped both his arms round my knees, attempting to throw me on my back. I was in those days 185 lbs. of bone and muscle, and I countered by striking upwards with my knee, taking him right under the chin. That staggered him, but did not unloose his hold, and he very nearly had me down. I managed however to bring down on his forehead the bludgeon I was carrying, but he was too close to me for the blow to have full effect. He was, as a matter of fact, temporarily insane with drink, and I could not make him loosen his grasp of me. I got him down on his back, jumped with my knees on his abdomen, and tried to choke him by pressing

my stick with both hands across his windpipe. In doing that I bruised my knuckles on the gravel in such cruel fashion that I carry the scars to this day. At last he got to his feet again, and his wind then began to give out. I had battered him with my stick, but at too short range to have proper effect on a raving maniac as he was. "Raving" is not the right word in this case, for the only sound that came from him was his stertorous breathing. No voice broke the stillness; and the full moon shone down on the fight out of a cloudless sky—the sole witness of it. At length I got him braced back against the railings of the enclosure called the "park," in a grip that held him motionless, and I then shouted for Gibson, my office clerk,—whom I knew to have been left in barracks. He heard my voice, and came out to see: "Good God! Inspector! what is the matter?" he cried.

"Run back inside and bring your handcuffs." In an instant he was back with them.

"Now fasten one on his left wrist."

As P. attempted to resist this, I now dealt him a smashing blow on the left arm with my bludgeon which settled the matter, and the other wrist was immediately secured. Gibson and I then dragged him into the barracks, and locked him up in a cell just as he was, with the handcuffs on. After instructing the station guard to inform the sergeant-major on his return to barracks that P. was to be kept in durance vile until I gave further orders in the morning, I went over to my quarters, where I greatly alarmed my wife by being violently sick at the stomach. I administered to myself a much needed sedative, and went to bed.

This encounter had lasted about twenty minutes.

To be strictly accurate I should say that it began in 1898 and lasted until 1899. The man told us later that he never had any idea that he was fighting me. He said that all the time he thought it was the same Gibson who is mentioned above, and whom, for some reason or other, he disliked very much. Gibson was a man of very light complexion. Of course this adventure made it very clear that P. was one of those unfortunates who should never touch liquor in any circumstances.

On the following morning I went to the cell about 7 o'clock, had P. released, and proceeded to inspect him. He presented a pitiful spectacle, with his face, head and neck all bruised and bloody; his uniform torn and dirty; his eyes bloodshot and one badly blackened, and his tongue literally hanging out of his mouth. Considering the matter far too serious a one for departmental discipline, I determined to take criminal proceedings against P. on my own responsibility. I therefore ordered the sergeant-major to let him have a bath and put on plain clothes, to be marched before the Clerk of Courts at the latter's house—New Year's Day being a public holiday—so that I could prefer a criminal charge against him, the result of which would have entailed his immediate dismissal from the force. But I found that I had reckoned without the views of my wife, my children, and my sergeant-major. These all formed a deputation which waited on me with such exceedingly urgent representations in favour of the delinquent, that I was persuaded to abandon my intention. I then compromised by countermanding my orders about allowing P. to be restored to a presentable condition, and directing a parade of all the men in barracks to fall in at 8 o'clock. When this was ready I had P. marched from the

cell, in the same deplorable condition, by an escort of a corporal and one man, and halted facing the parade, twenty paces away. I then related to the men what had happened during the previous night, pointed out the miserable condition, physical and mental, to which P. had been reduced; and wound up by telling him that, moved by the entreaties of the sergeant-major, backed by those of my wife and children, I had decided to let the mauling which I had given him and the disgrace of thus appearing before his comrades on that parade be sufficient punishment for his offence. With the tears running down his cheeks he thanked me; I dismissed the parade; and nothing more was ever heard of the matter. I left Trelawny about six weeks later, and never saw P. again until the 6th April, 1902. He was on that day, brought over from Falmouth by Sub-Inspector Toole as one of a reinforcement on the occasion of the Montego Bay riots, an account of which appears in a later chapter; and I was then very pleased to see a full corporal's stripes on his sleeve.

I regret however to relate that he was ultimately dismissed from the force as "an incorrigible drunkard"—to use the words of the order. But I think I may safely assert that no other officer of the Jamaica Constabulary has ever undergone such an extraordinary experience as is narrated above.

I have made mention in this chapter of the opportunities which I enjoyed while in Trelawny for indulging my literary and artistic tastes. It may interest my readers of a younger generation to learn that in 1897 the Directors of the Institute of Jamaica organised an Arts and Crafts Competition in honour of the Diamond Jubilee of Her Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, in

which I won the first prize for musical composition, and also for singing (tenor). To me also was awarded the first prize for a poem on Jamaica suitable to the occasion. I sent in two poems, both of which were printed in the *Journal* of the Institute. One I have already inflicted on my readers in Chapter II; and I herewith crave their indulgence to tender for their perusal—and, I hope, delectation—the one which gained the first prize.

JAMAICA.

Through the dim and distant ages, in a silence deep and dark,

Happy, artless child of Nature, roamed thy woods the Arawak;

Rose along thy coral beaches from their sands so white and warm

Merry shout of Indian maiden, while around her dusky form

Curled and clung the crystal water, clasping it in fond embrace.

Doomed was laughter, doomed was freedom, doomed was all thy gentle race—

Doomed on that black day when, seaward, gleaming white the Spaniard's sail

And his dark hulls' sombre shadow speeding hither on the gale

Tore aside the veil that hid thee, gentle daughter of the West,

And the dark and grim Castilian clutched thee to his cruel breast.

Once more shadows close around thee—shadows stained
 with blood and tears—
Darker veil that lifts or lights not nigh on twice a hundred years;
Till again on the bright bosom of thy blue, gem-studded
 sea
Floats a sail and flaunts a banner bearing westward
 down to thee.

[Floating sail and flaunting banner fill the Spaniard's
 heart with dread,
For he knows the bitter story of Armada's burial red.]
England's Lion rends the darkness, drives the grim
 Castilian forth,
And he flees—who shall withstand them, hardy children
 of the North?

More than twice a hundred years have passed into the
 grave of Time
Since that day when Britain's warriors first thy mountain
 slopes did climb:
Years of warfare, years of suffering, years of darkness
 dun and dim,
Years,—some few—of peace and plenty, years of peril
 stern and grim.
Yet behind the darkness gleaming, slowly, surely piercing
 through,
Dawned the heaven-born light of Freedom, changed thy
 tints to rosier hue.
Rose the mighty sun of Progress, smiling on thee with
 his ray,
And from out the clouds of darkness guided thee to
 realms of Day.

Now thou stand'st with head uplifted, while above
serenely waves
That proud flag beneath whose shadow men no longer
may be slaves,
Joining all those vast dominions on whose bounds there
sets no sun
To acclaim their Empire's ruler—her whose woman's
heart has won
All the love of all her subjects, binding them with
chains unseen—
Truest woman, wife and mother; sixty years most
mighty Queen!

Upward! Onward! be thy motto—upward, on towards
the Light,
Marching in the march of Progress, striving in the
cause of Right;
Till thy sons shall prove them worthy of the charm
which Nature's hand
Strews so lavishly around thy forests, streams, and
coral strand.

In February 1899 I bid a regretful farewell to Trelawny, on being transferred to St. Mary, where I found a very different state of affairs. It might best be described as a condition of lawlessness.

The banana trade was advancing and increasing by leaps and bounds, bringing in its train all the evils inherent to a "get-rich-quick" industry; especially in

a community so lacking in moral stamina as ours is. Port Maria and Annotto Bay, the chief shipping ports, swarmed with ruffians and criminals from every parish of the island, who were able to earn, by carrying bananas for three days, sufficient to keep them in idleness for the remaining four of the week, and to allow them to indulge in their favourite amusement of gambling and debauchery of various kinds. The loading of the fruit steamers generally took place at nights; so those who know the country and the people will have no difficulty in forming mental pictures of the scenes that used to occur. All work was paid by results; and on banana days the lives and limbs of decent people using the roads were at the mercy of the ruffianly drivers who used to race with their carts and drays up and down the hilly and narrow roads of the parish by day and by night, hurrying to get as much fruit to the wharves as time would allow. I regret to have to say that some of the people of the proprietor class used to wink at the delinquencies in this direction of their drivers. There was a condition of general contempt of law and order. Almost the very first man whom I prosecuted was a magistrate of the parish. He was convicted and fined the maximum amount prescribed by the law; and this laid the foundation of a better state of things, although it earned for me the undying animosity of the gentleman in question and his very large array of followers and family connections. Again I had to apply those drastic measures—all on my own responsibility—which I have never known to fail; with the result that in less than a year I had succeeded in effecting a most marked improvement. I was threatened so openly with personal violence, the stories of which were taken

by servants to my wife, that she and some of my friends advised me to carry a revolver when travelling at night; which I declined to do. The climax was reached at a certain race meeting held on the course just outside Port Maria (enclosed in a zinc fence) at which it had been decided by the roughs that I was to have a severe beating—if not worse. Many of them actually *bought* sticks for the purpose; but these were simply taken away from them at the entrance gate by my men, and piled up. They made quite a respectable heap. I obtained a reinforcement of thirty picked men from Kingston for the occasion. A demonstration with stones was started about dusk, after the last race had been run; and when I thought it had gone far enough I carried the war into the enemy's country with a baton charge of about fifty men, with complete success. Some ten of the roughs jumped into the river which flows alongside the road just outside the course, and escaped by swimming; while we laid out a score of others along the road and in the gutters. One could have heard a pin drop in the streets of Port Maria that night; and the lesson was never forgotten.

An entirely novel condition of things was also created in the parish of St. Mary through the systematic raiding of certain properties by the negroes. It happened on several occasions that on going his rounds, especially on Monday mornings, a proprietor or overseer would find his boundary fence removed, and his logwood being actually cut down and chipped by a gang of men who, when spoken to, claimed the land as belonging to some of them. This was a very serious and unprecedented state of things, requiring strong treatment; so, after consultation with the Inspector Gen-

eral of Police and the Custos of the parish, Dr. (afterwards Sir John) Pringle, I obtained a free hand, and proceeded to deal with the situation after my own fashion. The fact was that some of the properties belonging to absentee owners had been entirely neglected for many years, thus affording the negroes opportunities of squatting on them. When it was found that the St. Mary lands consisted of the finest banana soil, perhaps, in the island, the owners of these places, and their representatives, began to take a renewed interest in them; hence the trouble arose. It should be explained that owing to the physical conditions of the parish sugar had gone out in St. Mary more quickly than anywhere else in the island, and there came nothing to fill its place until the banana industry sprang into being; so that land which had long been regarded as useless suddenly became very valuable.

It also transpired, when we traced this land-grabbing movement to its source, that the people were being egged on by an underling in the Record Office at Spanish Town, who had discovered among the archives some rather loosely worded old wills, made in the days of slavery, bequeathing certain portions of some of these properties to the slaves of the testators. These claims were thoroughly exploited by certain not over-scrupulous legal practitioners, who issued actions against the proprietors after I had squashed their attempts to obtain possession *vi et armis*; but every case resulted in judgment for the defendants. I was fortunate to have in this campaign the very able support and assistance of Mr. C. Halman Beard, who had been appointed Resident Magistrate for St. Mary very shortly prior to my arrival in the parish, and whose grasp of the law bear-

ing on the situation was, and still remains, unrivalled. As is well known, he was afterwards elevated to the Supreme Court bench.

In nearly all the cases, appeals were taken to the Supreme Court; but the decisions of our Resident Magistrate were invariably upheld. Eventually we got hold of the moving spirit in the conspiracy, and his trial and conviction put an end to the agitation. In less than two years peace and quietness was completely established in St. Mary, and there has not been any recrudescence of the movement since. The chief proprietors of the parish gave me very satisfactory and substantial expressions of their appreciation of my services.

My health had suffered somewhat during the campaign in St. Mary, and I was strongly advised to take a holiday; which was not surprising, seeing that I had served nearly twenty-four years with no further relaxation than an occasional month's leave, about once in three years. Accordingly in May 1901 I went to England once more, and ultimately remained away from the island until the end of March 1902.

While in the old country I lectured on Jamaica at various places, under the auspices of Sir Alfred Jones, K.C.M.G., head of the firm of Elder Dempster & Co., who in 1901 inaugurated a fortnightly service of steamers plying between Bristol and Kingston for the purpose of establishing a trade in bananas. Incidentally there were special facilities afforded to passengers who did not belong to the wealthy class, by means of which a great number of persons in Jamaica were enabled to take a trip "home"—as we all call dear old England, except perhaps some of the people described in chapter III. In like manner tourists were attracted to the

island; which has since that date become very much better known in England than it had previously been.

Having provided myself with a collection of lime-light views, and curiosities of various kinds, I delivered lectures on two occasions at the Imperial Institute, and once at the Society of Arts, besides at a couple of other places in London, and also in Bedford. At one of my Imperial Institute lectures the chair was taken by Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wylie Norman, under whom I had served while he was Governor of Jamaica, and at the Society of Arts by Mr. W. F. Lawrence, M.P. for one of the divisions of Liverpool, and proprietor of Fairfield and Roundhill estates in the vicinity of Montego Bay. There were on these occasions several other people present deeply interested in Jamaica, some of whom I had known in former years. Among them, I might mention Sir E. N. Walker, formerly Colonial Secretary of the island, Colonel W. G. Dawkins, a large land-holder in Clarendon, and Mrs. Henry Sewell of Trelawny, with her daughters. These people all gave me a most gratifying reception, and some of them showed me much attention and hospitality. If I should live to the age of five hundred years, I shall never forget the beauty of the day on which I landed at Avonmouth, after upwards of twenty years absence from dear old England, the 15th of May 1901. Along with a couple of kindred spirits I got up at four o'clock in the morning to see the sun rise over the North Devon hills, and watch his light gradually stealing over the lovely shores of the Bristol Channel out of a perfectly cloudless sky. And what a revelation was the railway journey across the "Garden of England" to Lon-

don, with the whole countryside one mass of bloom, white and pink and yellow!

From morning till night not a cloud passed over the sky. I was exceptionally fortunate in respect of the weather during the whole of my stay in England. Even in Scotland, during a period of ten days in August which I spent there, only one shower of rain fell. The Fifeshire people all said such a summer had not been seen for many years.

Before finally taking leave of the parish of St. Mary, I cannot help telling of another extraordinary experience of a personal nature that befell me there. It is one which, along with others, has often tempted me to endorse that celebrated sententious utterance of the beadle in *Oliver Twist*:—"The law is a ass." As all my readers of the better class know—irrespective of colour—there is in this island a type of man of mixed blood who seems to combine in his person all the vices and the objectionable qualities of both the races from which he is descended; his most salient characteristics being a fondness for alcohol, and an insolent demeanour towards all such persons as he thinks will submit to it. To my great regret I was forced to allow a man just of this type to enter the portals of my quarters at Port Maria to do some upholstering work—that being his trade—which was a matter of urgent necessity, and there being no one else in the town capable of doing it. His principal facial adornment was a moustache of almost Hungarian dimensions, which always smelt of rum—and not very good rum either. He worked in one of my outrooms for a few days; and every day my wife used to complain to me in the evenings of his insolent manner. At last, on the morning

of the 1st August 1899,—a Monday and a public holiday—while I was sitting reading on the verandah, my wife came to me with tears of indignation in her eyes and told me that she could not stand the man any longer. I accompanied her to the room where he was working and made her tell me in his presence what he had done. On hearing it I ordered the gentleman to leave my premises instantly. This, being just drunk enough to be impertinent, he point-blank refused to do; which filled me with an unholy joy, for I then immediately became entitled to eject him, without using greater force than was necessary, as the law prescribes. Dispatching one of my little boys to the police station next door to bring two of my men over at once, I proceeded to tackle the job myself; and grasping the upholsterer firmly by the scruff of the neck and that portion of his trousers on which he always sat, I conducted him out of doors and half-way across the back yard, when he suddenly turned partly round, seized the collar of a new flannel jacket which I was wearing, and ripped it off my back, tearing it in two. Being then legally authorised to repel an assault by force, I dashed him violently to the ground, asking him at the same time if he wanted any more. His reply to this was to bawl out several times at the top of his voice “Good God! my leg is fractured.” Just then my two men arrived; and as my friend was apparently unable to stand up, I made them lift him carefully, one on each side, and deposit him on the sidewalk of the street outside my back gate. It transpired afterwards that the small bone of his left leg—the *fibula*, running from the knee to ankle—was broken near the top. His friends removed him to the hospital, and he remained there about six weeks.

In the meantime, as soon as the Courts Office opened on the following day, I obtained one summons against him for assault on myself, and another for a similar offence committed, as I came to learn, on one of my little boys two or three days previously. As soon as he left the hospital these summonses were served on him. He was tried and convicted on both charges, and fined in sums amounting, with costs, to upwards of £2. As he could not pay he was actually removed to Spanish Town, and confined in the district prison there for a few days, when his friends raised enough to pay his fine, and he was released. The ordinary man would take it for granted that the matter would have ended there. Nothing of the sort! His friends—and I believe relatives—were connections of the man whom I have mentioned in an earlier part of this chapter as the J.P. whom I had occasion to prosecute; and one member of the family was a solicitor. Through their agency this man was enabled, in spite of all the foregoing, to sue me six months afterwards in the Supreme Court *in forma pauperis* for £500 damages. That is to say, he got his process and the services of a solicitor, and of counsel to conduct his case, at the expense of the taxpayers of Jamaica—or for nothing as far as he was concerned, anyhow. The case was tried at the Port Maria Circuit Court in March 1900 by a special jury. They returned, after five minutes deliberation, a unanimous verdict in my favour; and Mr. Justice Northcote, who presided, gave judgment for me, with costs. The expenses of my defence amounted to £45, of which I have never seen a penny to this day. Yes: on second thoughts I agree with Bumble.

One incident in connection with this case throws

a flood of light on what a sink of iniquity Port Maria was in those days, and what a man's job I had to tackle when I took charge of the place. One of the kings of the community was a man morally of just the same type as my upholsterer, only he was well off: a gambler, drunkard, bully, and loose character generally. I had had a couple of encounters with him, in the course of which he had learnt the true application of the negro proverb quoted in Chapter III of this book: "Duppy know who fe frighten;" but on this occasion he became so jubilant over the prospect of taking his revenge by what he regarded as the certainty of my losing the case, that he assembled a band of music in the lower part of the courthouse for the purpose of playing a triumphal march. On delivery of the adverse verdict, they all slunk home with their tails between their legs: sadder but wiser men.

Chapter XI.

THE MONTEGO BAY RIOTS.

It was with a heavy heart that I embarked at Avonmouth in March 1902 for my return to Jamaica. Although physically set up and refreshed, I was sore of heart at leaving behind my wife and all my children; with exception of my eldest son who had been serving his country in the Boer war since January 1901, and whom I had not seen at all during my stay. I should have been still more depressed if a flash of prophetic vision had given me some warning of what was in store for me; and I have here to ask the indulgence of my readers for introducing certain details, of a personal nature, but necessary to a complete understanding of the situation.

I was to some extent cheered by a faint ray of hope which had been shed on me by the Patronage Secretary at the Colonial Office. He informed me that my name had been noted for promotion to another colony, and would be considered on the occurrence of a suitable vacancy. He further advised me in the meantime to write, using his name, to the Inspector General of Police and apply for the dual appointment to the command of the combined parishes of St. James and Hanover, which was just about to be vacated by the removal to another West Indian island of the man who had been holding it for a couple of years; as that would give me at once an acceptable increase of emolument. I immediately acted on his kindly advice; but as there was

no time for a reply to reach home before the expiration of my leave, I was kept in suspense until my arrival in Jamaica; when I was notified, even before landing from the steamer, that my request had been granted.

Early in the following week, as I still had a few days leave to run, I went first to St. Mary to collect my belongings, and then to Montego Bay to take over my new command. I found that my headquarters were not to be in Montego Bay, which was the larger and more important town of the two parishes, but in the little fishing village (comparatively speaking) of Lucea; and this simply because the government had a house there for the residence of the Inspector, whereas in Montego Bay there were no quarters. The distance between the two towns is twenty-five miles. I had a deputy in the shape of an Irish sergeant-major in Montego Bay, an ex-Royal Irish Constabulary man. It struck me on taking over that the officer whom I was relieving was in a desperate hurry to get away, although the steamer by which he was to leave the island was not due to sail until the following week; but I did not at the time suspect the reason for his anxiety. He was a man of vast physical proportions; and if his tact and his courage had been cast on the same lines as his bodily bulk he would have been the ideal police officer. It transpired afterwards that he must have known some trouble was brewing, but no hint of it was ever breathed to me. (He has now been dead for some years.) I proceeded to Lucea on the following day to settle myself and get my things unpacked; and on Saturday the 5th April, the day after my arrival, at about 11.30 p.m., on my way home from the house of my old friend Dr. "Bill" Farquharson, the District

Medical Officer, where I had been dining, I received the following telegram from the Irish sergeant-major in Montego Bay:—"Riot here, send help at once." I knew that there were only some ten men all told available for duty in Montego Bay; I had not yet got my own travelling gear in order, as neither my horses nor my buggy had arrived; and, motor cars not having yet been introduced, there was no possibility of hiring a conveyance at half-past eleven on a Saturday night. Fortunately I found that my sergeant-major, Thompson—a black man—possessed a two-wheeled vehicle known as a "Parry Cart," not much bigger than a wheelbarrow, and a very fast little mare, which was turned out in a grasspiece adjoining the station. His boy was also at hand; and in about half-an-hour the conveyance was ready. Packing some clothing into a small tin case, and taking two of our carbines with bayonets and twenty rounds of ball cartridge, the sergeant-major and I set out on our twenty-five mile drive to Montego Bay in the pitchy darkness of a particularly black night. Knowing that by the Lucea road we should come to the Montego Bay police station before entering the town proper, the uppermost thought in my mind was what we should find on arriving there, and what to do with the horse and trap if it should become necessary to go into action at once. It was about four o'clock on Sunday morning the 6th when we arrived at the station; and everything was perfectly quiet. Not a soul was moving about in the street, though the ground was littered with bricks, large stones, bottles, and conch shells, while every pane of glass in the station windows was broken. The building, an old prison, was a very strong one, built of stone, and surrounded by a

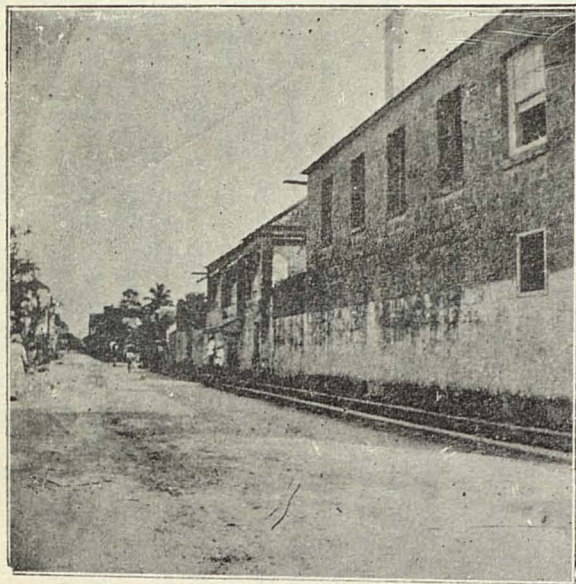


Photo by H. E. Upton

**THE BATTERED POLICE STATION,
MONTEGO BAY.**



Photo by H. E. Upton

THE SQUARE, MONTEGO BAY.

high stone wall, with a large paved courtyard inside. On gaining admission I found the Irish sergeant-major and all the men, nine in number, safe inside. I learnt that the cause of the row had been the arrest by a young constable of a notoriously rowdy character for disorderly conduct about eight o'clock on the previous evening, and the constable had been set upon by a gang of roughs, who rescued the prisoner, and then proceeded to attack the police guardroom which was in the courthouse, about quarter of a mile from the station. The sergeant-major had managed to keep the crowd at bay with a loaded revolver for a time, but was eventually compelled to beat a retreat to the station with the three or four men who were in the guardroom, not before he had fired a shot which wounded one of the attacking party. The remainder of the men, who had been scattered here and there in the town, also sought shelter in the station.

The mob, after invading the evacuated guardroom and wrecking everything in it, marched on to the station, where, unable to effect an entrance, they smashed every window that a missile could reach. The Irish sergeant-major with his wife and two children had quarters in the upper story of the main building facing the street. These they had to vacate as rapidly as possible, with the loss of a good deal of their crockery and glassware broken by the bricks and stones that came through the windows. On my arrival I found the family housed in my office, which was at the back, in the interior part of the building.

After receiving the sergeant-major's report I made my way through the now deserted streets to the telegraph office, and communicated with the Inspector

General in Kingston, who informed me in reply that he was coming down at once by special train with a strong reinforcement. The sergeant-major had telegraphed him during the previous night, and had also called upon Sub-Inspector Toole, who was then in command of the Trelawny division, at Falmouth, twenty-two miles away to the east, for assistance.

There was nothing more to do for the moment but return to the station and wait for daylight; which I did, snatching half-an-hour's sleep in a hammock slung between two beams of a store-room.

As soon as possible after daybreak I transferred the little luggage I had brought to the nearest available lodging-house, which was about half a mile away, at the other end of the town; sent back my Hanover sergeant-major to Lucea; and started out to inspect. The guardroom in the basement of the courthouse was a complete wreck, the floor strewn with bricks and stones, every piece of furniture demolished, and all the books destroyed. Early in the day Sub-Inspector Toole arrived from Falmouth with a party of about ten men. He joined me at the lodgings, while his men were sent to the station, and kept there; because in the existing state of affairs I did not consider it advisable to allow any of them to be seen about the streets. The only police protection which the town had during that Sunday consisted of Toole and myself; but everything was very quiet. We kept on wondering what was delaying the arrival of the Inspector General with his party, until we learnt that a report had gone abroad and had been telegraphed to Kingston by the station-master at Montego Bay that the rioters intended to damage the railway line so as to prevent the passage

of the special train. In consequence of this the train was proceeding very cautiously, and the line was constantly being inspected ahead of it.

At last, about 4 p.m. we had warning of the approach of the train, and I went with Toole to meet it at the railway station, which is a couple of hundred yards along the road to Lucea beyond the police station. We found there a crowd of at least fifteen hundred persons assembled, a large proportion of them quite well dressed, but eyeing Toole in a distinctly hostile manner, while towards myself they did not appear unfriendly. The reason for this turned out to be that many of them took him for the Irish sergeant-major, Phillips, who was the chief object of their aversion, and whose blood they were determined to have. The two men bore some resemblance to each other. Presently the train drew up, and discharged the Inspector General of Police, Inspector Clark of Spanish Town, a couple of sergeant-majors, and between sixty and seventy rank and file, all completely armed, and provided with ball cartridge.

As they were marched away to the police station the mob set up an ironical cheer, and I heard more than one man remark:—"Cho! that is not half enough for us to-night."

This gave me an inkling of what was coming; and it was subsequently proved that the riot of the previous night had been a premature and accidental ebullition, and that the real outbreak had been organised for the Sunday night, as soon as the evening service in the churches should have come to an end.

A few magistrates of the town had met the Inspector General at the railway station; and naturally on his

arrival I fell back into second place. These gentlemen took charge of him, showed him about, and displayed their own ignorance of the real state of affairs by persuading him that the riot of the previous night had no serious import, but was merely disorderly conduct on the part of some roughs, and that nothing further was likely to take place in that direction. In accordance with what he was told by these magistrates, and without informing me of his intentions, or consulting me in any way, he made the following dispositions:—He bestowed the four officers at the lodging-house which I have mentioned above, while all the men were quartered in the police station, nearly half a mile away, at the other end of the town. For the beats in the town—normally patrolled by one man each—he ordered the Irish sergeant-major to tell off four men to each, carrying only batons and handcuffs. Then, as soon as we had dined, he sent Toole, who was the junior officer, to the police station to stay in charge there; while he, myself—the next to him in seniority—and Clark, remained thus cut off from the rest of our force, to await developments. Evening service was then still going on in the churches, and everything seemed quiet. About half-an-hour after Toole's departure an ominous roar began to fill the air, accompanied by the sound of a bugle or a cornet in the direction of the square in the centre of the town where the courthouse is; and presently the Inspector General's orderly came in from the street in a rather excited condition and reported that he heard a terrific row in the direction named. The Inspector General then ordered me to go and investigate, to return and report to him if possible; if not, to go on to the station and await further orders there. It

was a pitch dark night, and there were no lamps in the streets; the only light being that which issued from the windows of the adjoining houses. On emerging into the square about two hundred yards away from the lodging, I found it very dark, and empty, save for half-a-dozen men armed with heavy sticks; but I heard a tremendous uproar of voices coming towards me down one of the side streets leading into the square, the shrill blast of police whistles, and a sound of a cornet playing the tune of "Onward Christian Soldiers." I went up to the men and asked them what was the meaning of it. Receiving very insolent and threatening replies, and seeing that to return to the lodgings would be to run into the arms of the crowd, I hurried on as fast as I could walk to the station, arriving there about a hundred yards ahead of the yelling mob, which consisted of at least two thousand persons. The sounds they emitted were exactly the same as those described in Stanley's "Darkest Africa," which book I had been reading in England not two months before, as accompanying an attack made on his party by the Lake Tanganyika savages. That circumstance impressed itself on my mind in the most distinct manner.

On being admitted to the station I found Toole had some fifty men paraded in the yard, and was then engaged in serving out ball cartridge to them. He reported to me that nearly all the men who had been posted on the beats had been driven in, every one more or less seriously wounded; while some were still missing. All this while the mob was yelling outside the station; police whistles were blowing the alarm call somewhere out in the town, and two revolver shots were fired.

The mob had halted in front of the station and were throwing over the wall stones, bricks, conch shells, and bottles filled with sand and with water, some of which missiles did considerable damage in our ranks. After indulging in this pastime for some five minutes, they swept further along the road towards the railway station, and I then made preparations against their return to renew the attack. Finding that some of the men had begun to fix their bayonets I immediately ordered them to desist, and showed them how to use the butt end of the carbine. Presently the howling mob retraced its steps, and once more halted in front of the station to renew the bombardment. By this time I had unlocked the big gate which was used to allow vehicles to enter the yard, and I suddenly flung it open, taking the mob completely by surprise and charging right into the heart of it with the butts of the carbines. The street was immediately strewn with the wounded, and the crowd temporarily dispersed. We had got home into the very heart of the mob. From among the nooks and corners of the numerous small houses and yards in the neighbourhood, however, a galling fire of missiles was kept up; for which we, a solid mass of men in dark uniforms against the background of the station wall, formed an easy target, while our assailants were under cover; so I very soon again sought the protection of the station to await the orders of the Inspector General, as I had been directed. I then discovered that Toole had been carried in unconscious from the blow of a brick on his temple, and that some twenty men were upstairs in the barrackroom, many of them seriously injured. Toole lay insensible until daylight next morning. The district medical officer had made his way in-

to the station, and was attending to the wounded; while the captain of a steamer in the harbour had managed to get a block of ice to us.

Presently my attention was attracted by a loud hammering on the gate of the station, and the voice of the Inspector General calling out to Toole to march out the armed party; not knowing what had become of me. Opening the gate myself, I found him in a white uniform jacket and helmet stained with blood, one arm hanging helpless at his side, and apparently much exhausted and out of breath. He told me that he had barely escaped with his life; did not know what had become of Clark, but thought that he must have been killed; and ordered me to take out the armed party, clear the streets and the square, and fire if I thought it necessary, for he had been given to understand that it was the intention of the mob to burn down the chief business part of the town in the vicinity of the court-house.

I carried out my orders, marching all the men who were able to stand up in the ranks along the main street into the square, with fixed bayonets. The street was so strewn with missiles of various kinds—which were also rained upon us as we marched along—that men were tripping and falling every three or four yards, and we did not dare to leave any of them on the road, or they would most assuredly have perished at the hands of the mob. On reaching the square I found it filled with a horde of yelling savages; while the discharge of missiles still continued as vigorously as ever. Seeing no prospect of otherwise putting an end to the disturbance, and as our numbers were being steadily depleted by casualties—I myself being the only officer

not yet disabled—I gave the order for independent firing. Some twenty-five shots were fired altogether, and the effect was magical. There was no blank cartridge, and no firing over the heads of the rioters to the manifest danger of innocent people in the houses surrounding the square. At first some of the mob gave out that we were using blank cartridge; but when the bullets began to fly, and one ruffian went down with a ball through his heart—he was afterwards picked up with a stone in each hand—they realised what was happening; and in three minutes the square was clear, while a terrified silence prevailed.

Now what had happened to the Inspector General was this:—

Having cut himself off from all communication with his command, knowing that a disturbance was afoot, and having sent me out to ascertain the nature of it, without waiting for any further information, he had donned the most conspicuous dress which he could possibly select, namely a white tunic and helmet, lit a cigar, and gone out for an evening stroll into the square, which was the base of the rioters, just as if nothing unusual was taking place. He took with him Inspector Clark, who was also smoking a cigar, and wearing a helmet, but whose tunic was blue. On reaching the square he was accosted by a certain “gentleman” of the town who pointed out to him a lad lying in the roadway, and informed him that this lad had been brutally beaten by the police and perhaps fatally injured; would he look at him? At this time the square was filled with the remnants of the mob which I had just charged outside the police station. As the Inspector General and Clark, in compliance with this request,

stooped down over the recumbent figure of the lad, they were violently assaulted from behind with sticks and other implements. Fortunately for the Inspector General his helmet remained on his head, or he would never have got up alive. He was a man of powerful physique, and thus able to knock down a couple of his assailants with his fists and escape by running to the police station, as we have seen, although terribly battered and bruised. Clark's helmet was knocked off, and he received a blow on the base of the skull which laid him out apparently dead, and put him out of action for the rest of the night. His life was saved by a couple of young fellows belonging to the Public Works Department, who persuaded the rioters that he was already a dead man. I practically spent the whole remainder of the night in marching an armed patrol about the business quarters of the town; and during one of these excursions, at about one o'clock in the morning, Clark was handed over to me by his rescuers in a partly delirious condition, which lasted until daylight. About two hours later I rescued sergeant-major Crawford of Trelawny from a house near the station in which he had been sheltered by some decent people. He was so badly hurt that he was only kept alive by hypodermic injections of strychnine; and he was ultimately invalided out of the service as the result of his injuries. The same fate overtook some eight or nine other men who were wounded on that night of the 6th April, 1902.

Out of four officers and some seventy of other ranks engaged, the police suffered casualties amounting to upwards of fifty per cent. of their numbers; while two of the rioters were killed, and some twenty-four were wounded. The wounded were nearly all treated by a

well-known obeahman at Roehampton in St. James; and I never heard of any fatal results. I had the satisfaction about a year afterwards of obtaining a conviction for manslaughter against this same man. He operated on a Montego Bay Chinaman for aneurism of the femoral artery by cupping, and caused him to bleed to death.

The riots which I have thus described were a big thing for Jamaica: the biggest that has ever happened so far in the annals of the Jamaica Constabulary Force; and it was a notable event, as setting at rest all the uncertainty which I had previously often heard expressed in various quarters as to whether our men would prove true to their salt if they should ever be called upon to use their weapons against their own kith and kin. I am proud to have had the honour of thus "blooding" the Jamaica Constabulary, especially in such trying circumstances as I have described. They proved their loyalty to the hilt on the night of the 6th April, 1902; and they have done so repeatedly since then.

The trouble that I had was not to lead them on, but to keep them in hand when the riot had properly started; and if I had had the misfortune to be put out of action, as all the other officers were, I am afraid there would have been a bloody massacre in Montego Bay that night. The Inspector General of Police paid very dearly in the end for his rashness. He had to go to England on six months leave in order to recuperate from his injuries; and in less than two years after his return to the island, he died quite suddenly one day while out on a tour of inspection in a country parish. Nothing will ever persuade me that his death was not

directly traceable to those injuries. A tablet to his memory stands in the Half-way Tree parish church.

In connection with this episode I cannot help mentioning one of the many remarkable coincidences which have occurred during my life. In the closing paragraphs of the lecture on Jamaica which, as is mentioned in the previous chapter, I held at the Society of Arts, with Mr. W. F. Lawrence M.P., in the chair, I gave a short sketch of the organisation of the Jamaica Constabulary, and told my audience that I had sometimes heard doubts expressed as to their loyalty. I said that although the necessity for using their arms had not yet arisen since the formation of the force, if it ever should do so, I hoped that I would be present on the occasion, and I was quite prepared to stand or fall by the loyalty of our men. Exactly two months afterwards the occasion did arise. I was present, and actually gave the very first command to fire; while the men amply justified the confidence in them which I had expressed in that London lecture room. Mr. Lawrence himself arrived in the island about three weeks later, on a visit to his estates near Montego Bay. Of course he had heard by cable of the disturbance before leaving England. He came to see me at my lodgings, and, shaking me warmly by the hand, he said:—"Well I am delighted to see you safe and sound. You have been making history since last we met. As soon as I learnt of the riots I remembered what you had said about your men in that lecture at which I presided; and I see that your confidence in them was quite justified." So it undoubtedly was. As I said in my evidence before the Commission of Enquiry which was shortly afterwards assembled to investigate the whole matter:—"No body

of men could have behaved better." I spoke nothing more than the truth. The barrackroom upstairs was like a shambles, with Dr. George Thompson the D.M.O., (since deceased), working in his shirt-sleeves like a demon among the wounded men; but at every periodical call to "fall in" for patrol during that awful night every man who could stand on his legs at all limped into the ranks to follow me. Of the sub-officers and men present only a small proportion of the older ones knew me personally, as up to that period all my service had been at the other end of the island; but all knew me by reputation; and every one, down to the recruits from the depot who had been brought along, followed my lead with that loyalty and devotion which I am proud to say I have always found among those of the rank and file of the force whom I have commanded, right up to the last day of my forty-seven years service.

There were several curious little episodes during that night's work, of which I think the following was the most peculiar. Those who know Montego Bay will remember that about a hundred yards beyond the police station, opposite to Trinity Chapel, Barnett Road takes a sudden turn to the right, debouching into St. James Street, crossing the Creek by a stone bridge. As already stated, the night was pitch dark; and every time the patrol crossed that bridge we were assaulted, coming and going, by a hail of missiles consisting of conch shells, stones, bottles filled with sand or water, chunks of wood, and other things. A couple of my men were knocked out every time we set foot on this bridge; and on one occasion something very massive—I think it must have been a conch shell—whizzed past my ear,

just missing me, and laid out a young constable who was standing next to me. We had to carry him, unconscious, into barracks. On arriving within a few yards of the big gate, I then halted the men, and backed them up as closely as possible against the wall of the station. Taking a loaded carbine from my office clerk—who is now the bailiff of the Manchester Resident Magistrate's Court, having retired from the force with the rank of sergeant-major—I advanced cautiously into the middle of the street so as to get as much of a view of the bridge as the darkness would allow. Observing on the crown of the bridge some dim object moving about that was faintly visible amid the surrounding gloom I "drew a bead" on it and fired. What became of the bullet I cannot say; but there was one terrific yell; and we afterwards passed and repassed that spot unmolested for the remainder of the night. It later transpired that our assailants in this locality had been the scum of the criminal population from "Meagre Bay" and other slums, who had been hiding under the bridge in the bed of the Creek.

I do not think I can close this narrative of the events of that memorable night without paying a tribute to the conduct of Mrs. Phillips, the wife of my Irish sergeant-major. A rather frail and delicate little woman, the mother of two tow-headed babies, she had been driven out of her quarters, as we have seen, on the Saturday night by the smashing of her windows and the destruction of much of her property, and taken refuge in the rooms at the back, in the inner part of my office, which were not exposed to the street. I may say that the outer office had also been wrecked. When going upstairs to look for Toole, after the charge

with the butt end of the carbine which is described above, I found her bending over him, wetting his head with ice, and for the moment heedless of the cries of her babies in the adjoining room. Looking up at me, pale, but calm, she said:—"Oh Inspector do you think we are in any real danger, aren't you going to shoot?" I replied:—"Don't you worry, Mrs. Phillips; we have just been giving the brutes a taste of the butt end of the carbine, we still have the bayonet and the bullet in reserve; you have nothing to be afraid of." She continued to minister to Toole's needs; she afterwards nursed the Inspector General, and many of the wounded sub-officers. She made coffee and toast for us, and worked the whole live-long night, besides attending to the babies in the intervals. I myself, after dressing in my quarters at Lucea on the morning of Saturday the 5th never got into a bed, or had my clothes off until Tuesday the 8th April.

Such is the story of the Montego Bay riots of the 6th April 1902, and the "blooding" of the Jamaica Constabulary; now, with that apathy and ignorance with respect to the history of their own country so characteristic of Jamaicans, all consigned to oblivion, save by those who were living within the danger zone on that memorable night. Many of these told me in the course of the succeeding days what a comfort it had been to them during those dark hours to hear the tramp, tramp, of my armed patrol along the streets, and my voice giving orders.

Of course the whole affair created a tremendous excitement throughout the island; and the usual lies and exaggerations found their way into print. The *Gleaner* naturally sent a special reporter to the scene;

but, as is always the case at a crisis of this kind, the views of the emissaries of the press are invariably coloured and biassed by the kind of people with whom they are compelled to associate; which, it is scarcely necessary to remark, are not the companions of an Inspector of Police with any due regard to his social environment: especially in the case of such an iconoclastic individual as myself. Thus it happened that in the earlier reports transmitted to Kingston my name was never mentioned at all, except in some wild talk about the Inspector General and myself being placed on our trial for murder! The only other mention made of me was in the columns of the *New Century*, a paper run by the man who then represented St. James in the Legislative Council, congratulating the community on the appointment of such an experienced officer as myself to command the police of St. James. This paragraph was quoted in the *Gleaner*. Later, when the Commission of Enquiry sat, and things had begun to appear in their true perspective, my evidence was described in *Gleaner* headlines as a "Thrilling Story." For the details of all this please see the next chapter.

But such is the short memory of this community, and its indifference to the achievements of its "sons of the soil"—to use a favourite catch phrase—unless they happen to have money, that for many years past, and up to the present moment, I have been meeting people sufficiently old and sufficiently educated to know better, who ask me:—"Were you ever in Montego Bay?"

Sic transit gloria mundi.

Chapter XII.

THE AFTERMATH.

On the psychological side I am what one of my favourite authors, Mr. Edward Clodd, calls a "mental peptic," that is to say entirely devoid of superstition in any shape or form, and having absolutely no faith in astrology, fortune-telling, divination, or kindred arts. But the following circumstance has always forcibly impressed me as a remarkable instance of the "long arm of coincidence," and given my unbelief a rather severe jolt.

On my voyage to England in May 1901, which is mentioned in a previous chapter, a young lady fellow-passenger who claimed to be an expert fortune-teller—with cards, be it understood—at a *seance* held on deck one afternoon warned me to "beware of a big dark man with a black beard." That forms a very accurate description of the personage who, while in authority over me here, after subjecting me to indignities and petty persecutions of various kinds, wound up by ultimately wrecking my career in the public service, as will appear later in these pages.

He began to show the cloven hoof in the course of the events which I am about to relate as forming the aftermath of the Montego Bay riots; and, had I been of a less trustful and unsuspecting nature, I should have then prepared myself against his final achievement towards me. I consider it nothing more or less than justice to myself to enlighten a puzzled and

mystified public as to the reason why an officer of the Jamaica Constabulary, having such long and efficient service to my credit, bearing the reputation, and possessing the qualifications which I do, was never promoted to the rank of Deputy Inspector General; and that justice I propose now to do myself.

I beg again to apologise and express my regret to the reader for introducing certain references to my private affairs; but some knowledge of these is indispensable to a full understanding of the situation which now began to develop as the result of the riots.

It is scarcely necessary for me to say that I have carefully preserved through all these years copies of such documentary evidence necessary to support my assertions as I have had access to; and that the originals of them repose in the archives of the colony; where are also to be found those which I have not had the opportunity of seeing, but of which the purport has been conveyed to me.

It is a matter of common knowledge, among those who are old enough to remember, that the island was at this period ruled by two Governors; Sir A. W. L. Hemming, a most amiable character, and a true gentleman in every sense of the word, being the Governor *de jure*; while his Colonial Secretary, (then) Mr. Olivier, was the Governor *de facto*.

At the time of the riots the former was absent on a visit to General Leonard Wood in Cuba, so that the latter held undisputed sway. He acted with characteristic energy; losing no time in himself visiting Montego Bay, and ordering the Commodore at Port Royal to send down a cruiser to our assistance. He himself arrived by special train on Monday 7th April; and H.M.S. "Tribune" dropped anchor in the

harbour in the evening of the same day, to be relieved later by the "Pallas." Mr. Schooles, the Attorney General, and, I think, one or two other high officials accompanied him; and a meeting of the Privy Council was held at the house of Mr. Maxwell Hall, then the Resident Magistrate for St. James. All during this time the Inspector General and Inspectors Clark and Toole were lying disabled in my office, thus converted into a temporary hospital; while I was carrying on, subject to the orders of Mr. Wright, who was capable at any rate of issuing them.

A company of the West India Regiment also arrived by the train, with a captain and two subalterns; but as their presence had then become quite unnecessary, they did not remain more than forty-eight hours. On Wednesday the 9th, if I remember aright, the wounded were dispatched by train to Spanish Town and Kingston, Mr. Olivier leaving by the same opportunity. His departure was attended by myself and the naval and military officers; and he addressed a few remarks to these, in the course of which he designated me as "the representative of the government." So it came about that I had naval and military captains and lieutenants for a short period saluting me, and saying "Sir." Just at that juncture I reached the highest pinnacle of dignity to which I ever attained; and as Mr. Olivier had been pleased to express to me verbally the fullest appreciation of my behaviour throughout the whole episode, on the warm recommendation of Mr. Wright, I was lulled into the belief that my course would hereafter be plain sailing: a belief that was speedily to be shattered to pieces.

A reinforcement of police arrived a couple of

days later to replace the wounded men and those whom it was necessary to send back to their respective divisions. This consisted of about a hundred men, comprising a large number of advanced recruits from the depot, as well as seasoned and trained sub-officers and constables from Kingston, St. Catherine and Clarendon. They were commanded by Sub-Inspector Field, along with whom came the European sergeant-major from the depot; and they brought with them tents and other equipment for the purpose of camping out in the courtyard, as there was not sufficient room for them in the barrack buildings. I was ordered to make special arrangements for messing them at the public expense; and I may say at once that during the whole period of four weeks that those men remained with me, I never had one word of complaint from the public against any of them; while there were not more than half-a-dozen instances of minor breaches of discipline; and this in spite of their being confined to barracks after nine o'clock every night. Their conduct was exemplary, and a thing for the force to be proud of. Among those who were with me at this period was Corporal Minto, who rose later to the rank of sergeant-major, and has now retired on his pension. He is well known in Kingston.

To fill up the men's spare time, of which they had a great deal, and to keep them out of mischief, I used frequently to take them out for route marches through the streets of Montego Bay and into the country; visiting a couple of villages which had a bad reputation, and striking such terror into their inhabitants that one could see the cold sweat running down their faces. As the men swung along with their car-

bines at the slope, bayonets fixed. and my two buglers sounding marches at the head of them, a deep, lasting, and most wholesome impression was produced on the populace of Montego Bay and the vicinity. There was a complete metamorphosis. Owing to police inefficiency and laxity of long years standing—it was putting the screw on in this direction that really brought about the riots—it had become the most rowdy and disorderly town in the island; while the rough element, as afterwards transpired, had received most dangerous encouragement from people of a better class. One of these, a gentleman—since deceased—who enjoyed great popularity among them, and who actually held a commission of the peace, gave a strong stimulus to lawlessness by practically publicly declining to pay his taxes under the new Valuation Law which came into force that very year. In short, things were rotten to the core in nearly every respect. It may be mentioned here, as an illustration, that one of the very first official persons that I was instrumental in getting rid of was the Clerk of the Courts, the Crown Prosecutor if you please; against whom I made made out such a case that he was given the choice between retiring on his pension and being dismissed. After the cleaning up which the place got on the night of the 6th April, and subsequently, Montego Bay became easily the most orderly town in the island. For a long time afterwards the streets were practically deserted after dark; and by nine o'clock they were as silent as the grave. A factor which contributed very largely to this was the searchlight of the "Pallas." Lying right on the beach to the east of the harbour was a foul slum known as "Meagre Bay," inhabited by the very dregs of the population,

and notorious as such from one end of the island to the other. The "Pallas" lay right opposite to this place; and at my suggestion, night after night, from about 7.30 to 10, the searchlight was thrown on it and played slowly to and fro, with an occasional spasmodic flash towards the hills in the background of the town. The effect of this was to deplete Meagre Bay almost entirely of its population: some of them actually removed the houses in which they dwelt to places where they could hide from the deadly glare of the light. The "Pallas" remained with me for three weeks, and then left, to my great regret. I had passed many hours of pleasant relaxation on board of her, and formed friendships with a couple of her officers which lasted for years afterwards. But by this time we had finished rounding up the rioters, and her presence was no longer necessary; so to our mutual regret we bade each other farewell.

The first step which Mr. Olivier took after his return to headquarters was to appoint a Commission to enquire into all the circumstances connected with the riots. This consisted of the Chief Justice, Sir Fielding Clarke, as chairman, Colonel Egerton, then Officer Commanding the Forces, and the Hon. C. B. Vickers; at that time member of the Legislative Council for Westmoreland; while Mr. Jasper Cargill, who afterwards died prematurely while a Judge of the Supreme Court, was secretary.

No law officer of the Crown was sent down to advise and assist me in presenting our case before the Commission; and I was never instructed to regard Mr. Cargill in that capacity. As far as I was aware, he was simply the secretary and nothing more; but

of course he did give me the benefit of his advice and assistance throughout the whole of the proceedings.

When the time arrived for the Commission to assemble, practically the only persons present in the courthouse were the police and the witnesses whom we had summoned to give evidence. I may remark in passing that during this whole period, up to the time that all the rioters had been committed for trial, it was ordered that no constable should be sent out on duty unless he was armed. Consequently the members of the Commission were received with the customary "present arms" on their arrival at the court house; and on taking their seats they saw no more than, perhaps, a dozen people in the room besides the police. There was not even the usual crowd of idlers at the door or in the square outside, attracted by curiosity. The truth is that the preparations for, and the direct or indirect participation in, the riots had involved such a very large proportion of the kind of people who always put in an appearance on such occasions, as to preclude the possibility of any man having a clear conscience with regard to the enquiry; so they all gave it a wide berth.

As the days passed, however, a few more dropped in, and some of them came forward of their own free will to give evidence, nearly always in favour of the police. Some of them were decent black people who had literally saved the lives of constables on the night of the 6th April; conspicuous among them being a fine old man named Stephenson, a tailor, who gave evidence in our favour in the most fearless and independent manner, both then and subsequently before the criminal court, where his testimony proved most valuable. [I afterwards knew a

son of his, a dispenser in the public service, who was a chip of the old block.] The only really hostile witness was—following the example of his official chief, the Clerk of Courts mentioned above—a member of the staff of the R.M. Court; but he was very easily disposed of.

Another of the citizens of the town, a prominent politician, who had appeared, quite unsolicited, for the purpose of whitewashing the police, put his foot into it very badly when I, obtaining leave of the Commission to treat him as a hostile witness, and showing good cause for so doing, forced him to admit that he was the author of certain letters which had appeared at intervals in the local newspaper, abusing and vilifying in the most scurrilous manner the Irish sergeant-major, Phillips; whom the previous Inspector had always left to do his dirty work while he himself took shelter at his rural retreat in Lucea.

The paper in question, of which I produced the files of five years previous, was called *The New Century*; and its editor and proprietor was a character who had at one time been celebrated as the champion of lawlessness and hostility to the police, in respect of which there were several convictions recorded against him in the courts. The fact that this man had been elected to represent the parish of St. James in the Legislative Council describes more eloquently than any words of mine can possibly do the moral and social condition of Montego Bay. However I will refrain from saying all that I could say about him, in view of the fact that when in 1909 Sir Sydney Olivier gave the *coup de grace* to my career, as will hereafter be seen, he was the only man in the Legislative Council to utter

a word on my behalf. I had treated him throughout the whole of my time in Montego Bay with contumely and scorn such as he never experienced before or afterwards; but he had the manliness to forget it all, to denounce the Governor's action towards me, and to do his best towards obtaining for me the preferment which he considered to be my due as a police officer. He admitted at the time that he had no use for me as a *man*. He lived to be the "father" of the Legislative Council, and died some years ago at an advanced age. Peace be to his ashes! I am glad that about a year before his death I had the opportunity of shaking him by the hand and personally thanking him for his championship of my cause. I mention him now because in their report on the riots the Commission found that among the causes which led to them was the frequent appearance in the columns of his paper of letters derogatory to the police generally, and to Sergeant-major Phillips in particular, such as I have mentioned above in connection with the unsolicited witness; whose role, by the way, was the reverse of that of Balaam. He came to bless, but went away cursing, with his tail between his legs.

Space will not permit me to record all the findings of the Commission. Their report duly appeared in a "Gazette Extraordinary" which must be on file where such documents are usually kept. Suffice it to say that the police were completely justified of their action, except in one particular in which I myself was directly and immediately the chief person concerned; and which I now mention to prove my *bona fides*. I have described in the previous chapter how we were persistently attacked by unseen assailants while crossing



Photo by H. E. Upton

**BRIDGE OVER CREEK AND HOUSE FIRED INTO
(Marked X).**



Photo by H. E. Upton

SOME OF THE LADY RIOTERS.

the bridge over the creek, and the numerous casualties which we suffered there; also that it was pitch dark. Well, in despair at finding out where our assailants were concealed, it seemed at that time that the missiles were coming from a certain house of two storeys in the immediate neighbourhood of the bridge. I therefore ordered two men to fire into that house, and I myself saw to it that they aimed high, so as to prevent any injury to persons inside who might be innocent. Two bullets penetrated the upper windows of the house, striking a partition high up, smashing a picture hanging on it, and passed out through the roof. No one was hurt. This firing was deprecated; and that was the only jarring note in the report; struck, so to speak, from the comfortable depths of an armchair. It has always been a matter of wonder to me that I was not accidentally shot or bayoneted by my own men in the darkness of that terrible night. I was always in front of them, and I thus saved the lives of many people in the streets, for my men were beginning to "see red." I do not like to repeat what used frequently to be said by my personal friends, and many others, of what would have been the probable fate of the officer whom I had just relieved, if he had been present.

During all the time that the Commission was sitting the rounding up of the rioters proceeded apace. On my representing to the government that the whole matter was too big a task for the Clerk of Courts to undertake, (even if he had been a thoroughly competent and loyal officer of the Crown,) I had no difficulty in obtaining permission to employ outside legal aid; and I accordingly placed the whole prosecution in the able hands of Messrs. Brown and Harvey Clark,

solicitors, of Montego Bay; the former of whom still carries on a lucrative practice in that town, while the latter now occupies the post of Crown Solicitor. There were, it will be remembered, two riots: the first an accidental outbreak on the night of Saturday the 5th April, which had brought me, as described, from Lucea to Montego Bay, and the second the organised one of the 6th. Numbers of the roughs who were identified had taken part in both; and all in one or the other. As the evidence proceeded to develop itself—and witnesses came in freely after a few days, chiefly through the local knowledge and influence of Mr. Brown, who was interested as a citizen and proprietor as well as professionally—warrants were issued against sixty-eight of them. They were all arrested within some ten days, many being brought from the country parts; and they were then classified into groups, varying in numbers from four or five to eight or ten, the witnesses being divided according to the groups or individuals whom they were able to identify: some being charged as for the 5th April, some as for the 6th, and some for both dates. It was very cleverly done; and this method of assortment proved to be a great convenience. I do not recollect how many were committed for trial at the Circuit Court to be held in June, but, to make a long story short, no fewer than fifty-three were found guilty by the juries; which is a very large proportion. Among these were the men who had wounded the Inspector General and Inspector Clark, they being charged with those specific offences in addition to riot; and they received sentences of fifteen and twelve years respectively. The others had from six months to two years hard labour dealt out to them;

not that those sentences were considered sufficient to meet their deserts, but owing to the legal technicality that the Riot Act not having been read, their offence had to be treated as a misdemeanour, and not as a felony, as would otherwise have been the case. Two years thus became the maximum penalty. The fact that not a Justice of the Peace put in an appearance in support of the police that night was commented on in very strong terms by Mr. Justice Lumb, who presided at the trials. Not one of the gentlemen who had tried to persuade the Inspector General on the afternoon of the 6th April, as already narrated, that all the trouble was over, was seen by us during that night.

There is an idea prevailing among the public that before the police—or the military either for that matter—may fire on a mob, the Riot Act must be read. Let this narrative dispose of that fallacy once and for all. All the effect that the reading of the Riot Act produces is to convert a misdemeanour, punishable with a maximum sentence of two years, into a felony, incurring as much as fourteen years penal servitude. In all the proceedings before the Commission, and at the Circuit Court, the propriety of my giving the order to fire on the mob was never once called in question, or, indeed, even alluded to.

It was in direct consequence of the occurrences which I have described that the Inspectors of Police were afterwards appointed magistrates for their respective parishes. I myself hold commissions for no fewer than five. A curious complication in connection with these trials very nearly occurred; which, had it done so, would have necessitated nearly all the cases being tried over again. Mr. Justice Lumb, who was

in very bad health at the time, having disposed of all but three cases, succumbed to his illness, and had to be relieved by Mr. Justice Vickers, who presided at the trial of the remainder and duly delivered sentence.

But Mr. Lumb had deferred passing sentence on the thirty or forty convicted before him, it being his intention to deal with them all together at the close of the trials. It was a legal impossibility for any other judge to pass sentence on them. However, in a few days Mr. Lumb recovered sufficiently to return to Montego Bay once more, and to take his seat on the bench, hovering between life and death, and a ghastly object to behold. He was just able to gasp out the various sentences, totter to his carriage, and return to Montpelier hotel by the special train which had brought him down thence. He went on to Kingston next day by the passenger train; and was carried, more dead than alive, on board the steamer which was sailing for England that evening. He was very near death indeed; and if he had then passed away nothing would have persuaded the class of people from whom the convicts were drawn, that it was not their Obeah that had killed him. However, he fortunately survived a serious surgical operation, and lived to return to the island and resume his duties.

I have omitted to mention that the government, as a precautionary measure, sent H.M.S. "Psyche" to Montego Bay for the period during which the trials lasted. At the same time there arrived a strong police contingent of some sixty men, accompanied by Inspectors McCrea of Clarendon and Clark of St. Catherine. These all remained with me until the Circuit Court was over; and the men again conducted themselves



Photo by H. E. Upton

**WAITING AT RAILWAY STATION TO SEE
RIOTERS PASS.**

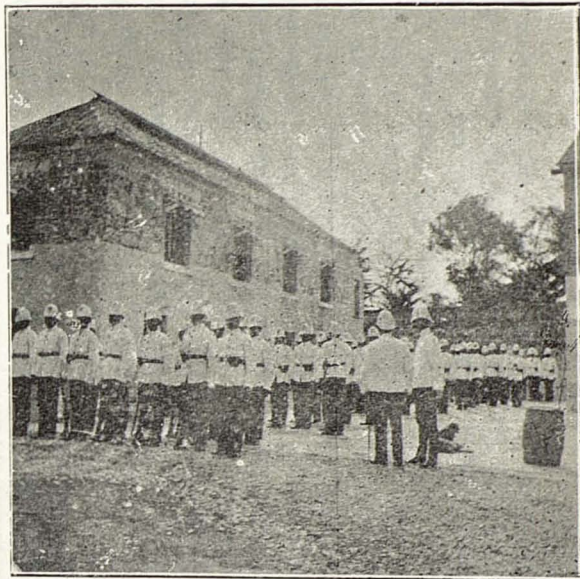


Photo by H. E. Upton

GUARD PARADING FOR COURT.

during the whole period in the same exemplary manner which I have described above. Also, it should be stated that the gentleman who at that time filled the post of Attorney General, The Hon. Henry Pipon Schooles, himself came down to the Circuit Court, and personally prosecuted every one of the riot cases. He showed me the greatest kindness; and often spoke to me, and of me in addressing the juries, in terms which caused the blush of modesty to mantle my weather-beaten cheek.

Of course it became necessary for Mr. Olivier to make a full report of the occurrences to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain; and this he did in a dispatch dated 10th April 1902, the following extract from which was sent to me for my information:—

“I am satisfied, and I have little doubt that you will also be satisfied, that the handling and the behaviour of the police on Sunday night was most admirable, and in all respects reflects the highest credit upon all members of the force concerned. The Officers, Inspector General Wright, Inspector Clark, Sub-Inspector Toole, and sergeant-major Crawford (sic) have suffered special injuries; but I do not consider that any one officer or man could be named for particular credit above the others. (This statement is open to question, in the light of the account given in the previous chapter of the manner in which the respective injuries were received. The only “officers” who were injured in actual fight with the mob were Sub-Inspector Toole and sergeant-major Crawford.) *You will not however fail to note the courage and ability displayed by Inspector Thomas when all the other officers were dis-*

abled and such great responsibility had devolved on him, and the discipline and steadfastness of his men."

Seeing that I was the officer responsible for the "handling" of the police from the beginning of the riot to the end, I very naturally regarded this testimony to my success as most gratifying, and was correspondingly proud of it.

Rewards now began to be distributed all round. Several sub-officers and men had to be discharged from the force on account of physical disability occasioned by injuries received in the riots—I do not remember the exact number—while many others, after more or less prolonged treatment in hospital, were able to resume duty. These all received compensation commensurate with their respective injuries.

The officers were rewarded as follows:—The Inspector General received a sum equivalent to three months' pay and was made a C.M.G. as well; while Clark and Toole each had two months' pay presented to them. I, the subject of the encomiums from Mr. Olivier which are quoted above, was rewarded with—nothing. It is true that I had not been seriously injured—although I had several minor hurts to show—but I did expect that when the King's Police Medal was instituted, not very long afterwards, I should have been the first recipient of that decoration. I am content to leave it to the readers of this book to say whether or not that expectation was an unreasonable one. But it was not until August 1923, upwards of twenty-one years later, that this medal was affixed to my breast by Sir Leslie Probyn at a special parade held at the depot for the purpose; and for this very much belated act of justice I have to thank the members of the

Colonial Office delegation which came to this island in December 1921, Messrs. Wood—now Lord Irwin, Viceroy of India—Wiseman, and Ormsby-Gore, the latter especially. 'I was told off to act as "guide, philosopher and friend" to these gentlemen in their tour of the western parishes of the island, and I took the opportunity of telling Mr. Ormsby-Gore about the riots, and showing him the battlefield. I travelled four days in their company, during which they "discovered" me. Mr. Ormsby-Gore on his return home made enquiries at the Colonial Office about my record; and the result was that the award to me of the King's Police Medal appeared among the New Year Honours of 1923, being the sole honour conferred in Jamaica. In connection with these money awards I will narrate the following story, leaving the reader to draw his own conclusions:—

Mr. Schooles, the Attorney General, whose attitude towards me throughout this episode I have described above, (he died in December 1913 as Sir Henry Schooles, Chief Justice of Gibraltar,) came again to Montego Bay to the next following Circuit Court, in October 1902. After greeting me in his usual warm and friendly manner, he addressed me thus:—

"By the way, Thomas, have you got your money for the riots yet?"

"Money for the riots? I have never heard of such a thing, and I am not expecting any."

After looking at me very hard for a couple of seconds he replied:—

"Do you really mean to say that you have not received any money for the riots, the same as the other officers?"

I again replied in the negative, more emphatically than before; whereupon he said:—

“Well, it’s a damned shame. I am going to tell you something now which you may make use of if you like; only don’t give me away. The other day Mr. Chamberlain’s final despatch on the subject of the riots was received; among other things he approved of the money rewards to the officers and so forth; and on this point he said that he saw no reason why Inspector Thomas, in consideration of the part he had played in the affair, should not receive a pecuniary reward on the same scale as the other officers, although he had not received any injury. But do you really mean to say that you haven’t received anything?”

“Not a penny,” said I.

“Well,” he then repeated, “it’s a damned shame.”

At this time certain events had occurred in connection with the riots which may throw some light on the fact that I was never permitted to receive a reward of any sort, except the paper one above quoted. These I will now proceed to narrate; but they require a separate chapter.

Chapter XIII.

STUDIES IN PSYCHOLOGY.

After the riots were over, when the accused persons had all been committed for trial and sent away to Spanish Town for safe-keeping, and conditions had once more become normal, evidence began to trickle in which showed conclusively that certain persons much higher up in the social scale had been the instigators of the disturbance. It was appalling to me to learn how numbers of the roughs of the town had actually been put through a sort of drill by certain young "gentlemen;" how open demonstrations of hostility to and contempt of the police had taken place in the broad light of day; and many other things, which accounted for the evident anxiety evinced by the officer whom I relieved to quit Montego Bay; but not one word of which appeared to have been reported to headquarters, or in any way suppressed, by this weakling.

I decided that, as a matter of common justice, prosecution should be undertaken, if possible, against these gentry; and in furtherance of my investigations I sent to the prisons three of my most intelligent men, to take statements from the convicts. These statements corroborated in every particular the evidence which I had gathered outside; and revealed other things in addition. Of course I reported to headquarters every detail of the proceedings which I was now engaged upon; and no one ever intimated to me that it was not the desire of the government to take any further

steps with regard to the riots. There was no voice which ever cried "halt;" and I naturally assumed that my action was approved of.

I may say that the Inspector General, Mr. Wright, was at this juncture absent in England on six months leave, in consequence of the injuries which he had received; and his *locum tenens*, the Deputy Inspector General, happened to be one of those very "popular" police officers for whom I cherish contempt. He is now dead. At any rate, when I had all my statements complete, I laid them before Mr. C. M. Calder, then the Resident Magistrate for Westmoreland and Hanover, of which latter parish I still had charge although my headquarters had been transferred to Montego Bay, where they should always have been. I did this so as to keep my intentions as secret as possible; and I asked Mr. Calder, to act in his capacity as an *ex-officio* magistrate for the whole island, and issue warrants for the arrest of the persons whom I laid information against. On perusal of the statements Mr. Calder decided that there was sufficient evidence to justify the issue of the warrants, and he signed the documents accordingly. These I then sent off by express to Montego Bay to Sergeant-major O'Sullivan, who had some time previously replaced Phillips.

I myself returned to Montego Bay on the same day about dusk; and I found that O'Sullivan had executed the warrants immediately on receipt of them, and had two of three accused safe in the lockup at that moment. My stroke had fallen on the population like a bolt from the blue; and as O'Sullivan and I patrolled the usually noisy square in front of the courthouse between eight and nine that night, you could have

heard a pin drop. The few people that were about were conversing in awe-struck whispers.

The three persons for whom I had obtained the warrants were: first, a certain solicitor of the town, a man of very dark complexion; second, another young man, of lighter shade, in mercantile employ; and third, a white youth, son of a Scotch Presbyterian Minister, who was a clerk to Messrs. J. E. Kerr and Co. This last named was a notorious rowdy; and used to hunt always in couples with No. 1. He had got wind of what was on foot, and was shipped off to the U.S.A. by one of Kerr and Co's steamers, whence he never returned to Jamaica, as far as I am aware. Of him more anon; but I think it is only an act of justice now to state that the experiences which No. 1 then underwent appeared to produce the effect of completely transforming him. He steadied down to the practice of his profession, of which he is an exceedingly able exponent, and has a correspondingly large *clientele*; while, so far from bearing me any ill will, he has ever since, during many subsequent years of intercourse, right up to the very last court which I ever attended, been one of my most enthusiastic champions; and never lost an opportunity of extolling, in public and in private, my virtues as a police officer. In short, I am very pleased to count him to-day among my best friends, and to wish continued success to him in his professional career.

When the escape of the white youth became known, the government communicated by cable with the police authorities of New York; and on his arrival there he was arrested and detained, pending the result of the proceedings against his two accomplices here.

When the latter were discharged, as will be shown later, he was also released by the New York police. As already stated, he never returned to the island; but, I believe, did very well in the U. S.; so that in his case, too, my action was a blessing in disguise. The same applies also, I think, to No. 2, who is still among us, making an honest livelihood.

Now, I am quite certain that of all the ten Governors whom I have served under, any other than the gentleman whose idiosyncrasies I am now discussing would at once have recognised the necessity of sending down one of the law officers of the Crown to conduct such an important prosecution; especially as all the numerous friends and supporters of the accused were now openly up in arms against me, headed by the honourable member for the parish, who is described in the previous chapter. But Mr. Olivier, the *de facto* Governor, thought otherwise. On my applying for legal assistance I was instructed to employ "a local solicitor at the cheapest possible rate." Those were the exact words, in the handwriting of Mr. Olivier himself, whose original minute was forwarded for my information.

I naturally offered the case to Mr. Phillpotts Brown, who had so ably conducted the riot prosecutions, as related in the previous chapter; but he declined it, as he told me, for sentimental reasons, the solicitor in question having been his own articulated clerk. I then retained the gentleman who is now the Hon. G. S. Ewen, Custos and M.L.C. of the parish of Trelawny, and was then practising his profession in the town of Falmouth. The convict witnesses having been brought down from Kingston and Spanish Town, we duly pre-

sented our case before the Resident Magistrate. This gentleman had entered the legal profession very late in life; and his most outstanding characteristic was certainly not strength.

I am quite certain that during all my long experience there has never been brought a police prosecution which was hedged round by greater difficulties. The other side got up a large subscription to bring down for the defence the late Mr. A. L. P. Lake,—who was one of the very ablest lawyers of his day; and he simply hypnotised—I cannot find any other term for it—most of the witnesses for the prosecution, and the R.M. as well. It is a fundamental maxim of law that the evidence of accomplices in the commission of crime must be corroborated by that of outside persons not in any way implicated, directly or indirectly; and herein lay our chief difficulty, as nearly every man of the two or three thousand who had been in the streets and the square on the night of the 6th April, and near enough to describe the occurrences, had been out for mischief, and was trying to save his own skin. I should have mentioned that a stick of dynamite, with detonator and charred fuse attached, had been found in the police guardroom at the court house. That was not the work of the brain of any such scum as the convicted rioters. It distinctly pointed to intelligence and malignity of a higher order.

Another of our difficulties lay in the fact that the Clerk of Courts was actually assisting the defence by handing to Mr. Lake the very briefs which had been used by the Attorney General at the riot trials in June, to help him in his cross-examination of our witnesses. It was this outrageous indiscretion which led to the

compulsory retirement of that official—who had then been thirty years in Montego Bay—from the service, as told in the previous chapter. Mr. Ewen reported it by telegram to the Colonial Secretary, and I by letter to the Acting Inspector General. That circumstance will give some indication of the rotten state of “Noble St. James” at that period.

It is hardly necessary to say that every day while the case lasted the court house was crammed to suffocation.

We produced, among other witnesses, the very boy, who, as previously described, had been persuaded by one of the accused to lie down on the ground on the approach of Mr. Wright and Inspector Clark, and pretend to be unconscious. We found him miles away in the interior of the parish. He related how, as soon as the gentlemen stooped over him, “the crowd began to beat them;” and how he himself received a few of the blows; also how he had afterwards been taken, by the same man who had persuaded him to lie down and act as a decoy, to the near-by surgery of Dr. McCatty, for medical treatment of injuries inflicted by the police, unprovoked; and how the doctor had “driven him away” because there was nothing the matter with him. This accused party was duly identified by Inspector Clark as the one who had drawn the attention of Mr. Wright and himself to the boy lying on the ground. I will not now say which of the three it was. In the latter part of his evidence the boy was corroborated by Dr. McCatty himself; but Mr. Lake did not have much difficulty in hypnotising the R.M. into the view that the first part of his evidence was tainted by the fact that in thus acting as a de-

coy at the behest of the accused he had become an accomplice. And so it went on for some three days, as far as my memory serves me. I remember that two or three of our white witnesses, giving their accounts of certain preparations which the accused were alleged to have made prior to the riots, succumbed to Mr. Lake's spell, and made pitiful exhibitions of themselves under cross-examination. One of them told me afterwards that Lake had hypnotised him.

At any rate—to make a long story short—the R.M. came to the conclusion that there had not been a sufficiently strong *prima facie* case made out for him to send before a jury, and he discharged the accused; to the great disgust and disappointment of the most respectable element of the residents of Montego Bay.

Before leaving the town, Mr. Lake, who had long been a personal friend of mine, came to see me at my lodgings, and discussed the situation with me. He said:—"Old man, I am very sorry to have had to appear against you; but I would have been a fool to refuse the fee they sent me; and now that it's over I don't mind telling you that I have my own opinion about the case. But as an old friend, I think I ought to let you know how some of these people detest you." He then mentioned some three or four names, beginning with that of the honourable member for the parish, and continued: "They are all too mortally afraid of you to try on anything openly, but they will do anything they can behind your back to make trouble for you."

My reply was:—"I thank you very much, Lake; but you can tell them from me that if they could only

just begin to form some faint idea of how utterly I despise them, they would be sick at the stomach."

"That's all right, old chap, but be on your guard."

Immediately after the conclusion of the riot trials the Inspector General had gone on leave to England for a few months, in order fully to recover from the effects of the injuries which he had received. He returned to the island in November 1902, and very shortly afterwards paid me a visit of inspection. One fine morning, as we were riding off to a distant out-station in the hills, he suddenly said to me:—"Thomas, Olivier has got his knife into you." (He had a way of blurting out things like that.) Amazed beyond expression, I replied:—"What on earth for?"

"Oh! about those prosecutions after I left, and those people you arrested. It was all very well to run in that lot that were tried at the Circuit Court, but you shouldn't have troubled——" (mentioning the name of the solicitor who had been arrested).

"Well," said I, "I am very sorry, but it seems an extraordinary thing that he didn't prevent me from arresting the people, as he knew all about it beforehand. I thought it very unfair that the rabble should suffer, and the people of a higher class who egged them on go scot free; and there is not a spark of moral doubt in anybody's mind that I got hold of the right men; and that there are plenty more besides."

"Yes; I daresay that's all right enough, but mark my words, *Olivier will never forgive you.*" Those are as nearly as possible the exact words that passed between us, noted down by me the same day on our return home.

The Inspector General proved a true prophet.

Olivier had got his "knife" into me; and he kept it there during the entire period of his connection with Jamaica until his final departure in February 1913. The final home-thrust of the "knife" into my vitals was given between 1908 and 1909, and therefore belongs to a later period of this veracious history; but I propose to forestall that portion of the narrative so as to get the Illustrious Fabian and my relations with him off the stage as quickly as possible.

As has been stated above, I had only returned from eleven months leave in England the week before the riots, and taken over the command of the St. James and Hanover divisions two days previously. I had been appointed to this dual command on the personal recommendation of Mr. C. Alexander Harris, Patronage Secretary to the Colonial Office, to relieve the officer who had held it for nearly three years previously, and who was being transferred to another colony. On the strength of the appointment and the increased emoluments attaching to it, I had left my wife behind in England along with five of our six children—one of whom was a girl—my eldest son being at the time a trooper in Baden-Powell's South African Constabulary, fighting in the Boer war; and she had settled herself in Bedford for educational purposes. The circumstances which now come next in order of narration will show how the effect of the first blow dealt me was to leave my family stranded in England, and myself stranded out here, neither being able to get to the other; and barely able to live from hand to mouth, with my princely salary and allowances amounting to £400 a year net, all told.

At the end of their report the Riot Commission

made certain recommendations with regard to weapons, ammunition, and others matters which I do not now recollect, the carrying out of which would have entailed the expenditure of a certain amount of money; so nothing was ever done about them. But they also made another recommendation, the effect of which was to deprive me of all the extra emolument which the dual appointment had brought me, and on the strength of which I had made the domestic arrangements described above; namely that there should be a separate officer in Montego Bay. I have previously pointed out that the reason the officer in charge of the two parishes was made to live in the fishing village of Lucea was that there were government quarters there, while in Montego Bay there were none: a penny wise pound foolish policy, as the event proved.

As this recommendation did not involve any expense, but, on the contrary, afforded an opportunity for the first thrust of the "knife" mentioned by the Inspector General by completely crippling me financially, very little time was lost in carrying it into effect. Consequently, early in 1903 I was ordered to hand over the parish of Hanover to a Sub-Inspector, and thus to remain in command of St. James only. From the date at which my headquarters had been transferred to Montego Bay, immediately after the riots, I had been in receipt of a fairly liberal house allowance, which, as I lived in lodgings, still further increased my emoluments; and I hoped that this allowance at any rate would be continued, as some compensation for what I stood to lose by the new arrangement. But I had reckoned without my host, for the government immediately bought a house, which I was directed to occupy

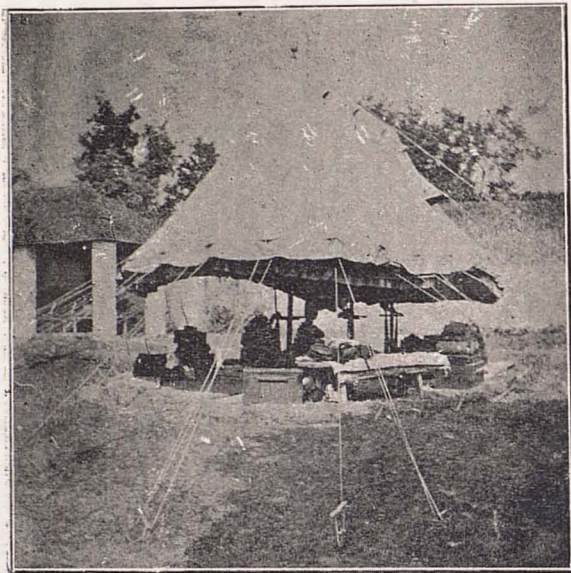


Photo by H. E. Upton
POLICE TENT IN STATION YARD.

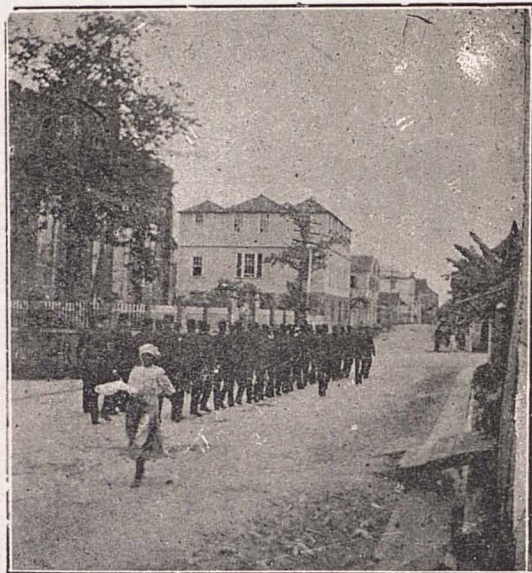


Photo by H. E. Upton
MARCHING TO COURT.

as my quarters. They did not even provide the house with the furniture to which all Inspectors of Police are entitled; and I was therefore compelled to borrow a few articles from sympathising friends, and actually to purchase others. I think that my powers of resistance must have been temporarily paralysed by the shock which I received; for I have often reflected since that I could quite properly and justly have refused to enter into occupation of that house until the necessary furniture had been provided. Thus a further thrust of the "knife" into my vitals had been effected.

It will therefore be seen that not only did I not receive any reward whatever for my services in the riots, but that I was actually deprived of all that which had previously been granted to me, and saddled with additional financial difficulties into the bargain. The government were fully aware of all my domestic responsibilities; and my conduct at the time of the riots had elicited from them the encomiums which I have quoted in the previous chapter; yet they deliberately stranded my family in England and myself in Jamaica, so that I never saw any of my people for seven long years: and this all under the guise of the necessity for carrying out that recommendation by the Riot Commission which is mentioned above. The most convincing proof of the fact that this was not such a vital necessity as represented is that I myself, at a later time, administered the police affairs of the parish of Hanover in conjunction with Westmoreland for periods amounting in the aggregate to nearly five years.

Among the many hardships which I now was made to suffer at the hands of a grateful government

was the necessity for helping to keep the wolf from the door by selling my buggy and harness; and thus being compelled, until long after I had reached the age of fifty, to do all my travelling in St. James, and later in the two large parishes of St. Elizabeth and Westmoreland, on horseback, in all weathers.

That is where Mr. Olivier left the "knife" sticking into me when he departed from the island in 1903. As will be seen in the following pages, he had not forgotten it even then, but gave it the final push home to the hilt five years later, on his return to this colony as Sir Sydney Olivier, Governor, both *de jure* and *de facto*.

He was sent out, as is well known, to retrieve the frightful situation created by the Kingston earthquake of the 14th January 1907, in consequence of the fact that Sir James Alexander Swettenham, who was Governor at that juncture, had thought it expedient to retire. I, being then stationed in St. Elizabeth, whither I had gone in July 1904, saw him again for the first time at a rural agricultural show, which he had come to open, on the 1st January 1908. After I had received him with a salute from my guard of honour, he walked up to me in full view of the assembled public, shook me warmly by the hand, and said: "How do you do Mr. Thomas? I am very pleased to see you again." In June of the same year he gave me an exactly similar cordial greeting on the grounds of what is now known as Munro College, at the athletic sports. Yet before the year was out he had irretrievably ruined my career in the public service. I have never been able to fathom the motives underlying his persistent and consistent mishandling of so humble and insigni-

ficant a person as myself. I have already given a fair sample of it, but worse is yet to come. I can only attribute it to an intuitive antipathy conceived by him at the very outset of our acquaintance, which later developed—on the principle of *vires acquirit eundo*—into not merely a dislike, but a perfectly rabid hatred of me. I could not possibly trespass so far on the patience of my readers as to enumerate the instances of slight, indignity, and petty persecution which I suffered at his hands during the period of his stay here as Governor. It forms a curious psychological phenomenon; and it must have been of a purely personal nature, because he was always ready to give me credit for meritorious services performed. I have given one instance already; and others will presently appear in this narrative.

Towards the end of 1908 the officer who was then Deputy Inspector General, and also in command of the Kingston police, announced his intention of retiring on pension. As the next in seniority to him, with thirty-one years service to my credit, I regarded my promotion to the vacancy as a certainty; a view in which I was supported by the then Inspector General, Kershaw, who discussed the matter with me at a visit of inspection to my division of St. Elizabeth.

This gentleman requires more than a passing mention in consequence of the part which he played in subsequent events. His calling was originally that of a land surveyor, having no connection with the Colonial Service whatever. He held a commission in the County Cork Artillery Militia, which entitled him to a military designation; arriving in Jamaica as a Major, and being afterwards promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-

Colonel. He entered by a side door into the public service, as recorded in the Colonial Office List of 1913, at the age of thirty-two, when he accompanied some Governor to British Honduras as Private Secretary and A.D.C. A vacancy arising in the command of the police of that little colony, this Governor got him appointed to it in 1886. It is stated of him in the place above quoted that he "commanded a column of cavalry at Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee review" in 1897. History sayeth not how a Captain of Cork Militia—and Artillery at that—came to be commanding a "column of cavalry;" but it may be that on such an occasion as that of The Diamond Jubilee, when Britain's forces were gathered together from the ends of the earth, it was highly irregular cavalry. He had earned both Jubilee and Coronation medals; and the ribbons of these he always wore on his tunic when travelling about the country, thus causing the public, unversed in such matters, to regard him with awe and reverence as a war-worn veteran, not knowing that these decorations had been conferred in piping times of peace. That fact will afford some index to his mentality; and further insight will be obtained by the following story about him:—

At one of his inspections of my St. Elizabeth division I told him the story recorded above of my treatment after the riots, dwelling particularly on the hardship of being obliged, at my age, to do all my travelling on horseback. (It happened to be just then a very wet season). This was the reply which I received from him by way of consolation:—"It must be very pleasant cantering along in the early morning." And it was not said ironically either, but in perfect good faith. Now, I had eight out-stations, the nearest of

which was fourteen, and the furthest thirty miles away. Of course it must always have been "early morning," and fine weather, and easy "cantering" for my horse and myself, all day every time that I visited these stations. I do not think that any comment is necessary.

I am bound to say, however, that he always exhibited a very friendly attitude towards me until he discovered what His Excellency's intentions were with respect to my promotion. Then he cruelly surprised and disappointed me by playing that gentleman's game in no half-hearted fashion. On my making formal application for the post of Deputy Inspector General he informed me that the matter was "under the consideration of the government." A second application met with a similar reply; and at length I came up to Kingston myself and interviewed him on the subject. At the interview he again stated that the matter was "under the consideration of the government."

Now it so happened that on that same day, after leaving Mr. Kershaw's office, I met at the Jamaica Club Inspector McCrea, the man who had then actually been selected and recommended for promotion over my head. He had been a very dear and intimate friend of mine from the days when he was a coffee planter in the Blue Mountains, and he was then ten years my junior in the service. He was an Englishman of a good old fighting stock, son of an admiral, and having numerous other relatives in the navy and army; and during all the years of our close and constant intercourse I had always found him to be the soul of honour. He had then been for some years in charge of the parish of Clarendon, where his name is still held in affectionate

remembrance. On seeing me he at once told me that he had been ordered to come to Kingston for a confidential interview with the Inspector General, and that this had taken place that very morning. The object of it was to ask him whether he was willing to accept the post of Deputy Inspector General. He demurred to it, and, true and loyal friend that he was, mentioned my name as being the man entitled to it. Kershaw told him not to worry about me, but simply to say whether he was willing or not. He raised several other objections to the proposal, as he really had no desire whatever to be transferred to Kingston; among which was that unpleasantness would be caused at the Colonial Office because he (Kershaw) knew very well that Thomas was not the man to allow himself to be passed over without appealing to the Secretary of State. Again he was told not to worry about me. Eventually he had asked for some time to consider the proposal; and ultimately, much against his will, he accepted it. This astounding revelation my friend McCrea made, of course under my solemn pledge of secrecy, which he knew he could rely on; and this is the first time that it has seen the light of day in writing. Naturally I could not make use of it in my appeal to the Secretary of State; but it accounted to me at once for the evident embarrassment which the gallant colonel had exhibited during his interview with me. McCrea remained my true and loyal friend up to the day of his sudden and premature death in May 1913.

As a matter of course I appealed to the Secretary of State as soon as McCrea's appointment was confirmed; but, smarting as I was under an intolerable sense of injustice and oppression, aggravated by utter help-

lessness, besides being in indifferent health at the time, I allowed my feelings to overcome my discretion; and I used language in describing the conduct of the Governor and the Inspector General—especially the latter—which was held to verge on insubordination, and thus gave an opening for what followed next. The reply to this memorial fell on me like a bomb-shell at Black River on the morning of the 22nd February 1909, in the guise of a communication from the Inspector General which ran thus:—

“I am directed by the Governor to inform you that you are interdicted from duty, and placed on leave of absence with full pay for such term as can be granted you under the regulations, concerning which a further communication will be sent to you; and that, by direction of the Secretary of State, you are required to proceed to England forthwith and *rejoin your family* and report your arrival at the Colonial Office.” The italics are mine; and in explanation of the passage I should state that in my memorial I had dwelt on the situation into which my domestic affairs had been plunged by my treatment at the hands of the government in 1903, as described above; and mentioned the fact that I had not seen any member of my family for seven years in consequence. It will not require much imagination on the part of the reader to realise the utter confusion into which this order threw me. There was I, struggling along, with a wife, and five children being educated, in England, (my eldest boy being still in South Africa,) barely able to exist from hand to mouth, and without any margin whatever for unforeseen contingencies, suddenly ordered to “proceed to England forthwith.” The news spread through Black River and

other places in the parish like wildfire, creating consternation among my friends and my sub-officers and men. The latter, at the instigation of my faithful and devoted sergeant-major, George Palmer, at once raised, largely by telegram, a substantial subscription for me, the proceeds of which they presented to me in the barrack-room, some with tears in their eyes. Friends came to the rescue by purchasing my saddlery and other articles of personal property, and tendering small loans which I need not repay until the day of judgment; and I was thus able to provide for immediate pressing necessities, and to report myself in Kingston two days after receipt of my orders. Arrived there, I interviewed the Colonial Secretary, to represent that I was without the means of paying my passage to England; whereupon he advanced me the sum required. Fortunately for me also, my tried and trusty friend, Sir John Pringle, happened to be in town; and he made me a present of a cheque large enough to remove all cause for immediate anxiety. I was thus able to sail on Thursday 25th February 1909, and so to enjoy thirteen days of comfort and much needed rest and quiet. I arrived in England on the 10th March, 1909. There had been a snowstorm two days before, and the snow was still melting in the streets of Bristol when I landed. I had only the same clothing—both upper and under—which I was wearing in Jamaica, and not even an efficient overcoat; but of course such a trifle as that did not disturb the equanimity of any of those who were responsible for ordering me to “proceed forthwith to England” in the winter-time.

I took up my residence at Southsea, where my wife was at the time; reported my arrival by letter to

the Colonial Office; and then sat down in a painful state of suspense to await my summons to London. This arrived in about a fortnight, and on a day towards the end of March, I duly presented myself at Downing Street. There I was very pleasantly received by one of the Under Secretaries, a robust, genial and kindly gentleman, rubicund of countenance, and altogether reminiscent of the conventional representations of John Bull.

He evidently found the task which had been laid upon him very distasteful; and he discharged it with a kindness and consideration towards me for which I can never cease to be grateful. There was present at our interview one of the principal clerks, a little man, of rotund aspect, wearing a pair of large gold-rimmed spectacles. He had before him a mass of correspondence from which he occasionally interposed a remark with the object of reminding his chief of some enormity on my part which the latter appeared to have overlooked. In other words, he was doing his best to "push the fire," as the phrase goes in Jamaica. But I was particularly pleased to note that every such attempt on the part of this underling was peremptorily brushed aside by his chief; until, in short, the young gentleman, realising that he was being snubbed, presently relapsed into silence.

Throughout the whole interview the personality of the chief figure, and the luxurious appointments of the room, with the cheerful fire in the grate,—in contrast to my own miserable plight, physical and mental—brought very forcibly to my mind another most expressive negro proverb, namely:—"Rock-stone a ribba battam nebber know sun hot." Which being interpre-

ted means that a stone at the bottom of a river has no opportunity of feeling the heat of the sun.

It was now explained to me that Sir Sydney Olivier had given as his reasons for not appointing me to the post of Deputy Inspector General the fact that he did not consider me "possessed of sufficient tact and discretion to be placed in command of the police of Kingston"—which the appointment would involve—and that I was "in financial difficulties." The first is such an easy way for any man who desires to damn the prospects of a subordinate whom he dislikes, isn't it? No evidence is necessary. The Governor's *ipse dixit* is sufficient; and the victim of his judgment is entirely helpless.

With regard to this point I shall later give ample proof of the opinion of my "tact and discretion" held by the inhabitants of St. Elizabeth, where I was stationed at the time, and where I spent altogether twelve years of my life; but I now defy any man who knows the circumstances, including the noble Lord Olivier himself, to challenge my assertion that the man who was thus sent to Kingston over my head on account of his superior "tact and discretion," was himself personally directly the cause of the "street-car" riots of February 1912, by insisting upon the arrest of two men of standing in the city of Kingston for refusing to pay what they regarded as an unlawful demand by the conductor of a street car. So much so that a public meeting was held in Kingston denouncing him as a menace to the peace of the community, and a resolution passed calling upon the government for his immediate removal from the metropolis.

The second allegation it is difficult to take ser-

iously. It is really the ponderous description of joke which one would expect from such a quarter. As I have explained in full detail in the previous chapter how, and by whom, my "financial difficulties" were created, it reminded me of the following American story:—

A youth of some fifteen years having been convicted by a jury in a Western state of murdering his father and mother with an axe, was asked by the judge if he had anything to say why sentence should not be passed on him. In reply the culprit asked the court to deal leniently with him, because he was "only a poor orphan."

If the intelligent reader compares the two situations carefully, he will find that an analogous principle of humour underlies them both. Apart from that, it would appear to suggest itself spontaneously to the unbiassed mind that the most obvious way to relieve the financial embarrassments of a police officer who at a supreme crisis had so conducted himself as to call forth the unqualified approval of the Governor—vide Olivier's dispatch about the riots quoted above— would be to increase his emoluments by promotion when opportunity offered. If there were any other reasons than these two for denying me my promotion, then all I can say is that they were carefully concealed from me.

My interviewer then proceeded to inform me that I had couched my communications to the Government in words of a character verging on insubordination; and that, as a condition of being permitted to return to duty, I should withdraw and apologise for my language. The alternative was being turned adrift on the cold

world. I respectfully pointed out to him that this judgment could just as easily have been passed upon me in Jamaica, where, at any rate, I should not run the risk of starving, instead of vastly increasing my "financial difficulties" by compelling me to take a voyage to England at my own expense. He did not attempt to argue the matter with me, but merely said that he was carrying out orders which he had received. I also urged upon him the consideration that the communications to which exception was taken had been written by me while suffering from ill-health, and, indeed, during sick leave. Of course I agreed at once to put my withdrawal and apology in writing; the only alternative being dismissal and starvation. He further gave proof of his sympathy with me by directing that I should receive an advance on account of my salary to meet current expenses, my application for which had previously been peremptorily refused by His Lordship the (then) Earl of Crewe, Secretary of State.

With all due deference and respect to the high authorities concerned, I have always maintained, and I still maintain, that the procedure adopted against me, as described above, was entirely *ultra vires*, and therefore illegal. I have never been able to find anything in the Colonial Office Regulations authorising such procedure; and the opinion which I hold is endorsed by legal friends of mine of very high standing indeed. The total sum which I was forced to borrow from the government for the expenses contingent on my compulsory trip amounted to £60; and that was in due course deducted from my salary on my return to duty. I have applied to three successive Secretaries of State for a refund of this money, but in vain; and I

am now debarred by the Statute of Limitations from seeking redress—if I have any—in a court of law.

This is then the condition to which I found myself reduced at the age of fifty-three, and after upwards of thirty-two years of service such as I have described: All prospects of promotion completely cut off; saddled with a debt of £60 in addition to the "financial difficulties" which were alleged as a reason for not promoting me; my private affairs thrown into irretrievable confusion; and, further, forever separated from my wife and family. I never saw any of them again. My wife died nearly twelve years after we had parted. Four of my five gallant boys laid down their young lives for England; while the sole survivor has been for fourteen years past separated from me by half the circumference of the globe, serving his King and country in an Indian regiment. So also is my only daughter, the wife of another officer of the Indian army; while I have five grandchildren whom I have never yet seen.

Of course as far as my further career in the service was concerned, it was a case of once unfit, always unfit; and as each successive vacancy in the post of Deputy Inspector General occurred, I underwent a process of automatic elimination. The first man to be passed over my head was, as I have already shown, ten years my junior in the service. The next to him was twelve, the next fifteen, and the next again twenty years junior to me; until at last I came down to saluting two Irishmen—one holding the substantive appointment, and the other acting for him while on leave—who had both served under me as sergeant-majors, one of them in two parishes.

I should be guilty of base ingratitude if I failed to place on record here my appreciation of the demeanour towards me of these two men in our altered circumstances. They have proved themselves to be the true gentlemen which Nature made them, by invariably preserving towards me the same attitude of respect and deference which they used to exhibit before our respective positions had been reversed. They have never addressed me, either orally or in writing, without a "handle" to my name; and when the news of my successive bereavements during the war, and afterwards, reached Jamaica, their letters and telegrams of condolence were always the first that I received.

Chapter XIV.

THE STORY.—CONTINUED.

There is in the German language a most significant word which has no exact equivalent in English. It expresses a feeling which I used always to regard as being peculiar to German mentality. That word is *Schadenfreude*. The literal English translation of it is "Harm-joy," a word which does not exist in our language; the nearest approach to it being "malice" or "malignity;" but *Schadenfreude* expresses a great deal more. A person who indulges in this emotion is a *Schadenfreudiger* (plural *Schadenfreudige*) meaning one who takes a delight in inflicting injury—the kind of person who would not hesitate to skin or roast alive anyone whom he particularly disliked; a typically Teutonic characteristic. After narrating the further experiences which I now found to be in store for me I am content to leave it to the readers of this book to say whether they can think of any English persons who deserve the appellation of *Schadenfreudige*. As previously stated, I had cherished the hope that having so completely wrecked my career once and for all, His Excellency Sir Sydney Olivier, K.C.M.G., and Lieutenant-Colonel A. E. Kershaw of the Cork Artillery Militia would have been content to allow me to return to my beloved St. Elizabeth, there to do my duty in my usual faithful manner, and end my days in the service in peace, and obscurity, at least. But I soon found that I had reckoned with-

out my host, and that these two potentates were not yet satisfied with their handiwork.

I arrived in Kingston three days before my fifty-third birthday, the 3rd of June 1909; and the first man who came on board the steamer to greet me was McCrea. He gave me certain information which forthwith plunged me back again into the blackest depths of despair. Incidentally, with his characteristic generosity, he dived into his pocket and took out a couple of banknotes which he pressed into my hand saying: "There old chap; this is to take you out of pawn." Seeing that I had at that moment exactly four shillings in my possession, I very badly wanted "taking out of pawn." While McCrea was talking to me an orderly appeared with a letter from the Inspector General containing news for which my friend had prepared me. I found that so far from returning to Black River, I was ordered to proceed at once and take charge of the parish of Westmoreland. The object of this was, no doubt, to deprive me of the house allowance of £50 which I drew in St. Elizabeth, there being no quarters there; and which, as I was able to live in lodgings, amounted to a proportionate increase in my emoluments. There were quarters in Savanna-la-Mar, in a disgracefully ruinous condition: of which more anon.

I duly proceeded to Savanna-la-Mar in compliance with my orders, and took charge. The inhabitants of that salubrious place, whom I shall duly deal with later, appeared to look at me rather askance, and to hold themselves aloof, although many of them were old acquaintances of mine. I soon discovered that this attitude was due to the following further hostile demonstration on the part of the Inspector Gen-

eral. A couple of days prior to my return he had issued for circulation throughout the force a general order announcing the proceedings to which I had been subjected, and the fact that I had been allowed to resume duty on the condition of having withdrawn and apologised for the terms which I had used in my memorials to the Secretary of State respecting the Inspector General. This order should have been read on parade at every police station in the island; but, as far as I could gather, all the officers showed their sympathy with me by neglecting to do so, and not even sending out the order to their sub-stations. However, Mr. Kershaw—or someone in his office—caused the order to be communicated to the “Gleaner,” in flagrant breach of the regulations, by which paper it was duly printed and circulated throughout the whole island, as a particularly spicy bit of news, of course.

Sir Sydney Olivier went away on leave the very day after my return; and the government devolved upon the Colonial Secretary. As this gentleman was a countryman of my own, and had known me ever since I joined the police force, I again fondly hoped for some amelioration from him of my truly parlous condition; but he had evidently received from his superior instructions not to relax the pressure in any way. The first thing I heard from him was that the £60 which I owed the government was to be recovered from my salary at the rate of £5 a month. I had already lost £4 3/4 a month by the house allowance, so that now it was proposed to increase my “financial difficulties” to the tune of £9 3/4 a month. I at once turned to my dear friend, Sir John Pringle—always a great power with the government—and

by his intervention the monthly instalments of the loan were reduced to £3. So there I was again; condemned to carry on my work, on horseback, in a ghastly place, among a hostile population; to live in a ruin; to be publicly humiliated in the general orders of the Constabulary Force and the columns of a newspaper; and finally, to have my emoluments reduced by £7 3/4 a month, on top of all that had gone before. When I look back on that black period of my life, I always wonder how I managed to survive it. I think my strength lay in the forces with which Nature endowed me at birth: an iron constitution, splendid health, inexhaustible vitality, bulldog tenacity of purpose, true British inability to accept defeat, and a relentless determination, which the passage of time does not affect, to get even with any person who may have inflicted on me gratuitous injury, or accorded to me cowardly and treacherous treatment. In connection with my experiences just at this juncture I must tell the following story, which is too good to be lost:—

In hunting the pages of the Colonial Office Regulations for some rule justifying the treatment which had been meted out to me, I found one which I had not expected; and that was that I was entitled to draw, as part of my full pay for three months, the house allowance of £4 3/4 a month above mentioned, as no portion of it had been used by the officer who had been my *locum tenens* during that period. The Inspector for Manchester had taken charge during my absence; and the three months were March, April and May; March being the last month of the financial year 1908-9. I immediately drew attention to this regulation and asked that the sum of £12 10/- thus

due to me should be paid. The reply which I received was to the effect that I might draw £8 6/8 for the months of April and May, but with respect to March the money had "lapsed" and was "no longer available." On receipt of this reply I exclaimed, like Cromwell at the battle of Dunbar:—"The Lord hath delivered him into my hand!" I drew my £8 6/8, and laid low until the return of Sir Sydney Olivier in September. Then, not wishing to appeal to him directly against something done by his representative during his absence, I put my complaint in the form of a memorial to the Secretary of State, asking that it be forwarded in the usual way. In this memorial I wrote to the following effect, accompanying it with copies of the correspondence:—I said that the decision with regard to the £4 3/4 for March might quite seriously, and without any suspicion of flippancy, be described as a "New Way to Pay Old Debts"; for the reason that the natural logical conclusion to which the argument led was that the government, in order to avoid all its liabilities, need do nothing more than defer payment of them until the close of the financial year; and then inform its various creditors that they could not be paid, as the money had "lapsed" and was "no longer available." On sending up this memorial I immediately received authority from His Excellency to draw the outstanding £4 3/4, together with a minute saying: "I do not suppose Mr. Thomas now desires that his memorial shall go forward to the Secretary of State." To which I replied: "Thank you, sir; I do not."

It is possible that among my readers may be found some to doubt the truth of this story. To such I would say first:—"If it were not true, how could I

dare to set it down here?" Second: "Could I possibly—or could anybody—have *invented* such a story?" And, thirdly, I would state that the whole of the correspondence involved must lie in the place where such documents are kept.

I remained in Westmoreland until June 1913, when Clark, the Inspector for St. Elizabeth, (twelve years my junior), was promoted over my head to be Deputy, on the sudden and premature death of McCrea. I at once applied to be sent back to St. Elizabeth; and, Sir Sydney Olivier having then taken his final departure from the island in January of that year, Mr. Kershaw was graciously pleased to accede to my request, and recommended that I should be transferred thither.

During the four years that I stayed in Westmoreland Sir Sydney Olivier never lost an opportunity of slighting me, or annoying me about something; but I really cannot trespass on the reader's patience with further details of these petty persecutions. Chief among them was the Episode of the Ruinous House, which kept me on the rack for upwards of a twelve-month. Then there were those of The Querulous and Mendacious Negro Druggist; and the Empty Sardine Tins in the bush outside the walls of the police station at Savanna-la-Mar; all the details of which would greatly surprise my readers—if, indeed, any of them should possess any capacity for further surprise after what they have already learnt of my experiences at His Excellency's hands. The first time I came face to face with him after my *débauché* was towards the end of the year at the inauguration of the Central Sugar Factory at Frome, the property of the gentleman who was then Custos of Westmoreland. By

his request I was present to receive the Governor with a small guard of honour; but after acknowledging my salute His Excellency did not then walk up and shake me warmly by the hand, as on the two occasions described in the previous year, saying:—"How do you do Mr. Thomas; I am very glad to see you again."

At this celebration the whole attendant ceremony was so thoroughly typical of Westmoreland mentality that I cannot resist the temptation to describe it; any more than I can omit to bear testimony to the luxurious nature of the luncheon which followed it. If Westmoreland did everything else on the same lines of excellence as it attains in the providing of such entertainments, then it would indeed stand on a pinnacle unapproached by any other parish with which I am acquainted.

Just about this time the Church Temperance Campaign was being vigorously prosecuted in England and all over the world; and, as every child knows, the manufacture of sugar and rum go hand in hand; and the latter is a most useful adjunct of the former, being, in fact, inseparable from it.

But these orthodox Christians, not content with the terrestrial glory conferred on their undertaking by the presence of His Excellency the Governor, conceived it to be their duty to invoke the Divine favour as well. Thus there was presented to my astonished gaze the extraordinary spectacle of an Archdeacon of the Anglican church, in full canonicals, invoking the blessing of the Deity on a rum factory; while the machinery was christened by the breaking of a bottle of champagne against it.

A further illustration of this peculiar psycho-

logical feature was afforded on the day of King Edward's funeral, in May, 1910.

For that occasion the Custos convened an assembly of the magistrates and notables of the parish to attend a service in the Savanna-la-Mar Parish Church at 11 a.m. They were all to gather at the court house, and go thence in solemn procession to the church; headed by myself and all my available men in full dress uniform, and under arms. The courthouse and the church are exactly opposite to each other, separated by the width of the main street; therefore all that was necessary was to cross the street. But I found, on arriving to take my part in the proceedings, that no such simple ceremonial was contemplated at all: they must "procesh," as Artemus Ward puts it. I also found that there had been provided a band to lend *éclat* to the occasion. This band consisted of four men in rusty black coats and antediluvian top and bowler hats. The instruments were two fiddles, a clarinet, and a wooden-sounding drum; and one of the fiddlers was blind, as was also the drummer. The route of the procession was to be by way of two short streets round the back of the court house, then, again into the main street, and across it into the church. The band led the procession. Behind it I marched at the head of my men, to the strains of what was alleged to be the "Dead March in Saul;" while behind us came the Archdeacon, then the Custos and the magistrates. Every few steps one of the blind men would stagger, or trip, and it then became necessary for the player next to him to suspend operations and grasp him by the arm to prevent him from falling; the effect of which on the already weird strains of the music may easily

be imagined. I have never in my life, before or since, taken part in proceedings of so grotesque a nature.

The most memorable event during my four years' stay in that parish was the hurricane which occurred in November 1912. It behaved in the most erratic manner, breaking all the hitherto recognized rules by which properly conducted hurricanes are regulated, according to the meteorologists. In the first place it came on two weeks after the hurricane season had been officially closed. It began on Friday the 15th November, and blew from the same quarter for seventy-two hours, exhausting itself finally on Monday the 18th. It then visited Montego Bay and Lucea, with the same disastrous effects as it had achieved in Westmoreland; and the verdict of the scientific men was that there were *two* hurricanes travelling in different directions which joined forces over the western end of the island. Incidentally it may be mentioned that Savanna-la-Mar had not been directly struck by a hurricane since the one which destroyed the old town in the last decade of the eighteenth century. This is mentioned in *Lady Nugent's Journal*. When this visitation occurred I was on sick leave, on the recommendation of the district medical officer; being completely run down, chiefly by the course of mental worry which I have already attempted to describe, with malaria super-added.

I obtained twenty-eight days leave; but I did not go far from Savanna-la-Mar, having arranged to spend my holiday with a friend at a pleasant place about twenty miles away, just on the border between Westmoreland and St. Elizabeth. I had at that time a new sergeant-major, arrived only three weeks previously, who would be in charge during my absence;

while the strength of my headquarters detachment, owing to sickness and other causes, had been reduced to a bare ten men. I therefore gave the sergeant-major strict instructions to communicate with me by post three times a week, and let me know how things were going on, so that I might be aware of the arising of any emergency; and I left the town on the 6th November.

For the first week all went well, and I got my reports from the sergeant-major with regularity. Then, on the 15th the hurricane began, with rising wind and a persistent drizzling rain from the south-east, increasing in intensity, and reaching its climax during the night of Sunday the 17th and the early hours of Monday morning, when I was driven by the elements out of my bedroom in a wing of the house at Fontheill, and forced to take shelter in the main building. From that house there is a fine view seaward, extending right down the coast to Savanna-la-Mar; and as the curtain of rain gradually thinned it became easy for me to see that badly as we had been damaged in Western St. Elizabeth, the conditions in Westmoreland were much worse. As I soon ascertained, the coast road leading from Savanna-la-Mar to Black River had been washed away at Bluefields, so that no letters could reach our post office; while all the telegraph lines had been blown down. Consequently, for five days we were cut off from communication with the outer world; and I awaited in restless anxiety news of the fate of Savanna-la-Mar. None came until the forenoon of Wednesday the 20th, when a rural policeman arrived on foot with a letter from the sergeant-major, having been compelled to leave

his horse many miles away, owing to the destruction of the road.

The contents of the sergeant-major's letter were of such an alarming nature as at once to convince me that it was my plain duty to forego the remainder of my sick leave, and proceed to Savanna-la-Mar as speedily as possible, to save the situation.

I therefore got my host to drive me into Black River, nine miles distant; and on arriving there I found that the interior road, which would take me by a circuitous route over the mountains, via Newmarket, Darliston and Whithorn, had been cleared sufficiently to admit of the passage of vehicles. The Inspector for St. Elizabeth was at that time my junior; so I called on him for as many of his men as he could spare, with arms and accoutrements, commandeered three motor cars, and started on Thursday morning the 21st for Savanna-la-Mar. From Whithorn, where the road joins that leading to Montego Bay, an extensive view was obtained of the desolation which had been wrought over the plains of Westmoreland. The whole country looked as if it had been swept by a fire; and there was not a green thing to be seen except grass and the leaves of the sugar canes lying prostrate on the ground. The ruins of sugar works and buildings of every description were visible in all directions; and the road down on the level had been converted into a stream, fortunately not too deep to prevent the passage of motor cars. I have been through several hurricanes, but never have I witnessed such a scene of devastation as I gazed on from Whithorn police station on that morning. I halted there for half-an-hour to gather what information I could from my sergeant; and while talking to him I saw

what surely must be a unique illustration of the terrifying effect which the hurricane had produced on wild creatures. A little "mango" humming-bird, one of those with two long tail feathers, came flying past, and stopped to perch on the front edge of the sergeant's cap, remaining there for several seconds, while he was standing in front of me, not more than a yard away. After hearing the sergeant's report I saw the immediate necessity of a strong reinforcement, and I wrote out a concise telegram to the Inspector General accordingly. As all telegraph lines in the parish were down, I entrusted this to one of my men who had a good horse, with instructions to ride along the Montego Bay road, and, if necessary, into Montego Bay itself, and to send the telegram from the very first station from which communication with Kingston could be had. My telegram asked for the immediate dispatch of at least thirty men, with a sergeant-major in charge. I and my party then proceeded on our journey to Savanna-la-Mar, eight miles further; but very slowly and cautiously on account of the water that was still streaming along the road, arriving there at about 11 a.m.

At this point a description of the place becomes necessary. It is easily the most ghastly parish town in the whole island. It is built in the middle of a mangrove swamp, that forms the boundary of most of the back yards of the premises in its lower part, which is really below sea level. During the very heavy rains, which occur there with great frequency, the extraordinary spectacle is witnessed of the water in the gutters flowing *up* the street, away from the beach, instead of discharging itself into the sea. (I had been told of this, but refused to believe it until I

saw it with my own eyes.) It is traversed from north to south by the longest street in Jamaica, a straight stretch of one mile, and of generous breadth. The inhabitants are very proud of Great George Street—which is its name—failing to see that its fine proportions serve to accentuate the insignificant and often squalid aspect of the buildings lining it on both sides; which, with a few exceptions, are all of wood, and do not appear ever to have been touched with paint from the time they were first erected. (I am speaking now of the appearance of the place up to the time of the hurricane. One good effect which that catastrophe produced was an improvement in the general style of architecture.) The police station—which was later destroyed by fire, as will in due course be narrated—was a disgrace to the parish and the government; and during the season of unusually high tides which preceded the hurricane, standing as it did in a back street, it was impossible to reach it dryshod from certain directions. At that season every one of the two or three back streets was more or less flooded by the rising of the water in the mangrove swamp forming the environs of the town. These streets were also wont to be ornamented with crab-holes made by the myriads of land-crabs residing in the vicinity; and not infrequently of such width and depth as to create a danger for animals using the roads. On arriving at Savanna-la-Mar with my little train of motor cars filled with armed constables, I received a perfect ovation from the groups of people gathered about Great George Street and the vicinity of the police station. I found my sergeant-major and the few men in various stages of exhaustion; wet, dirty, unshaved, and red-eyed for want of sleep. I

found some sixty odd homeless refugees in the station, who had been given shelter there; the town in ruins; the water police station down in the old fort by the beach turned upside down—the policemen barely escaping with their lives; and two ships that had been lying in the harbour wrecked on the reefs. Every shop and store had been unroofed and partially destroyed; with most of the goods in the open air, exposed to the elements; and, naturally, being looted at nights by the lower orders of the populace.

I also found the respectable portion of the population, white, coloured and black, in a state of great anxiety, both by reason of the looting and of the threats of the mob element; to which latter I have made allusion in Chapter IV, as being usual on such occasions. The government bonded warehouse had been wrecked, and there were two hundred puncheons of rum lying in the open. The wind had forced the sea up Great George Street within half-way to its northern end; and most of the people from the lower part of the town had made their escape up the street in canoes. The fury of the wind, as I ascertained for myself a couple of days later by seeing and tasting, had driven the salt spray from the sea as far as fifteen miles inland; the trees were covered with it. I found that though my small force of regular police had of necessity proved quite insufficient for the exigencies of the case, my sergeant-major, Frederick Mills, had risen to the occasion, and behaved right gallantly. Among other things he had induced the Clerk of Courts to convene a meeting of such magistrates as were available, and swear in a number of special constables, including several police pensioners who were on the spot. These were doing duty in the

streets when I arrived, thus giving the hungry and exhausted regulars an opportunity for much needed rest and refreshment. About an hour after my own arrival a large motor car drove in from Montego Bay with six additional police. These, I was notified, had been dispatched by the direct orders of the Governor himself, who, with the energy he always displayed on such occasions, had personally visited Montego Bay, —which, as above stated, had also been struck by the storm—and intended coming on to Savanna-la-Mar that evening. With the aid of these, in addition to the men whom I had brought from St. Elizabeth, I was soon able to straighten out matters a little, by posting armed guards over the rum lying in the ruins of the bonded warehouse, and at other important places. I was waited on by a deputation of merchants and shop-keepers, who made strong representations to me about the looting that was going on. That matter I took into my own hands. The moon was near the full at the time, and the nights were particularly brilliant; so I allowed myself to be seen walking slowly down the middle of Great George Street, and into every nook and corner of the ruins, with a double-barrelled shotgun on my shoulder, from about 10.30 p.m. until the small hours of the morning. I did that for two nights; and I was on the third day assured by the principal merchants of the place that looting had ceased entirely. So once more I had become almost as great a popular hero as I had been at the time of the Montego Bay riots; but these people of Savanna-la-Mar forgot all about this episode when they at the end of 1923 aided and abetted the present Custos of the parish in hounding me out of it; as will appear in a subsequent chapter.

On the following Sunday the thirty men I had requisitioned from Kingston arrived, with two sergeants, Smart and Medley, under the command of Sergeant-major Black. The last-named is still with us, and is a well known figure in the metropolis. My friend McCrea sent me the pick of the Kingston division, as I knew he would; and he did it in spite of the opposition of our gallant colonel, who did not want to send me any at all, and worried me incessantly to send them back during the three weeks they stayed with me. I have never been able to understand why Sir Sydney Olivier did not order the Inspector General himself to Savanna-la-Mar at this juncture. The latter knew that I had a strange sergeant-major, and only about ten men available for duty. He knew that I was on sick leave. He learnt from my reports, and from the press, of the awful nature of the catastrophe which had overwhelmed Savanna-la-Mar, Montego Bay and Lucea; a disaster at the scene of which the Governor considered his own presence necessary. Yet Mr. Kershaw never put in an appearance at that part of the island at all for seven months afterwards, until June 1913, after I had left Westmoreland. One would have thought that the motive of sheer curiosity alone would have brought him to the scene. But all he did was to sit in his office in Kingston nagging and worrying me about sending back the men, and the tremendous unauthorised expenditure which I had incurred in grappling with the emergency. Not only did the bills for motor car hire plunge him into a state of panic, but he even queried an extra charge of ten shillings which the police station scavenger had made, in consideration of the fact that the latrines were being used by some sixty refugees and thirty

men from Kingston, in addition to the normal population of the premises. In the end every single item of expenditure which I had incurred was paid by order of the Governor, who had visited the scene himself; but the reader may easily imagine the effect which these further annoyances produced on me in my already enfeebled state of health. Of course during this critical period, in addition to attending to my duties during the day, I was out at nights, sometimes till just before daybreak, inhaling the foul odours of mangrove swamp, rotting seaweed, and other offensive matter, until my condition became such that our medical officer forbade my doing any more night duty. I then had to leave that work entirely to Sergeant-Major Black with his two sergeants, assisted by my own sergeant-major. The entire Kingston detachment behaved during the three weeks they stayed with me in an exemplary manner, amid circumstances of great hardship and discomfort, which could not possibly be avoided. I saw to it that they were generously fed, at any rate.

Now, it will be remembered that Sir Sydney Olivier had visited Montego Bay for the purpose of inspecting the conditions there; had intimated his intention of proceeding to Savanna-la-Mar; and had ordered a reinforcement of six police to be sent to Westmoreland.

At about midnight on Thursday, 21st November, the day of my return to the town, a district constable turned up as I was strolling along Great George Street with my gun on my shoulder, and handed me a letter that had been entrusted to him by the Governor at Whithorn station; which, as stated above, lay on his road. This rural constable also

informed me that His Excellency had left the station for Fontabelle, the residence of the gentleman who was then Custos of the parish, lying in a different direction. This is the letter:—

Whithorn,

21 November, 1912.

6.30 p.m.

Dear Sir:

I am directed by the Governor to say that having in view the fact that, as he understands, you have returned to Sav-la-Mar and have assumed charge of the situation there—also that you have communicated what you consider necessary to the Inspector General

He will proceed direct from here to Fontabelle for the night. His Excellency proposes to visit Sav-la-Mar before breakfast tomorrow.

I am,

Sir,

Yours faithfully,

G. PEACOCKE, Captain,
Private Secretary.

To

Inspector Thomas,
Sav-la-Mar.

It will be noted that in his opinion the fact that I had “assumed charge of the situation” rendered it unnecessary for him to continue his journey to Savanna-la-Mar. He was quite satisfied. He duly made his appearance on the next day, and remained in the parish as the guest of the Custos for some days afterwards. That was the last occasion on which I

gazed on his countenance. During December I made an application to him to cancel that portion of my unexpired sick leave, which owing to my sense of duty I had voluntarily surrendered, in order to obviate the possibility of its counting against me in case of future leave being required.

To this application I received the following reply:—

Colonial Secretary's Office,
Jamaica,
6th January, 1913.

Sir:

I am directed by the Governor to acknowledge the receipt of your minute No. 1653/12 dated the 30th ultimo and to inform you that under the circumstances stated His Excellency cancels twelve days out of the twenty-eight days vacation leave granted to Inspector Herbert T. Thomas as from the 6th November, last.

2. I am to say that Mr. Thomas acted creditably in returning to duty when he did, and that His Excellency has pleasure in recognizing the public spirit of his action and trusts that his health has not suffered from the curtailment of his leave.

I have, etc.,

(Sgd.) P. C. CORK,
Colonial Secretary.

The Inspector General of Police,
Kingston.

I presume that as he had killed me and buried my carcass four years earlier, he thought it a grace-

ful and becoming act, on the eve of his departure from the colony, to lay these two wreaths on my grave; trusting no doubt thereby to lull my troubled spirit to eternal rest.

Before his final exit from these shores a public dinner was given to him; and the post-prandial orators belauded him with adulation so fulsome as to touch the border-line of nausea. He replied in kind; but I think that after the excitement attendant on his farewell had died down, he must have had to realise the truth of those immortal words which Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Mark Anthony:—

“The evil that men do lives after them.”

He has had an eye on this island ever since he left it; and there still exists a small clique of his favourites who have made more than one abortive attempt to get him back here; but it must have interested him very deeply to read certain tributes to his memory which appeared in the “Gleaner” at intervals after his departure, of which the following are samples, taken from papers of February, May, June, August and December, 1913.

The first, commenting on the after dinner oratory above described, reads as follows:—

“We agree that the Civil Service of Jamaica, as a whole, is as competent and efficient as that of any other Crown Colony. But we cannot help thinking that, in one respect, it has degenerated appreciably during the past five or six years. The heads of Departments seem to us to have lost all power of initiative. We can remember the time when heads of Departments, in their own respective spheres, exercised almost paramount influ-

ence—appreciated their responsibilities and were not afraid to act “off their own bats,” when occasion offered. But such a state of things does not exist to-day. What has happened recently in Jamaica, when His Excellency was away from the colony—and Sir Sydney Olivier has been absent in England more frequently than any of his predecessors? Are we wrong in saying that, during such periods, the responsible officials have simply “marked time”—have initiated nothing—have assumed the responsibility for nothing? We do not think that any intelligent observer of passing events will say we are wrong. It was not so in bygone years when Sir Neale Porter was Colonial Secretary, Sir Henry H. Hocking, Attorney General, Mr. V. G. Bell Director of Public Works, Mr. Maglashan Auditor General, Dr. Mosse Superintending Medical Officer. Why the change? It is easily explained. Sir Sydney Olivier has dominated everything, and made himself responsible for all the minutiae of administrative and legislative work. Even the Privy Council has ceased to be the power in the land which it formerly was—it has become little more than the registering machine of the Governor’s personal decisions. This has not tended to improve, or to make wisdom paramount in, the management of the colony’s affairs. And we hope that, when our next Governor arrives, the “status quo ante” will be restored; for our chief officials are as competent as those who went before them to discharge their responsible duties in an equally independent and responsible fashion.”

The next is a clipping from the London "Standard," which was copied into the "Gleaner."

"STRONG WORDS. A Circular Recently sent Out by Sir Sydney Olivier.—Language is Resented.—Letter to County Councils Regarding Small Holdings.

The "London Standard" publishes the following:—

"The Board of Agriculture has just issued a circular to county councils concerning the equipment of small holdings. This circular, which is signed by Sir Sydney Olivier, the new Permanent Secretary of the Board, is resented. It is declared that it is rare that the representatives of the people on our local bodies are addressed in such an autocratic tone by a Government official. It is urged that it might be conceivable that the tone adopted in the circular would prove suitable to the natives of Jamaica, where Sir Sydney Olivier was recently Governor; but addressed as it is to Englishmen—men of all classes, who are elected to their councils on the principle of "one man, one vote," and who perform without payment much valuable public service—it is regarded as improper, if not offensive. There would seem to be a new "atmosphere" at the Board of Agriculture.

In the circular in question Sir Sydney Olivier states that 'many of the schemes of equipment that have been placed before the Board of Agriculture have afforded no evidence of a determined attempt' to do what is really requisite, or 'an adequate appreciation' of the 'equipment re

quired for small holdings.' Again, he says that the county councils have 'often proceeded' on the assumption that their plans for the equipment of small holdings 'would be approved of as a matter of course,' and he informs the councils that the board "strongly deprecate this practice;" while he adds that in future the board 'intend to scrutinise closely' any proposals for equipment that may come before them. Moreover he says the board 'will not hesitate to withhold their approval' of proposals which they do not regard with satisfaction. These and other expressions are considered pretty straight and 'tall,' remembering the people to whom they are addressed and the paid Civil Servant by whom they are written. There are other statements of an equally stiff character."

Below follows the "Gleaner's" exceedingly pertinent editorial comment on the article in the "Standard":—

"OFFICIAL INDISCRETIONS.—Sir Sydney Olivier has "put his foot in it" very badly this time—and no mistake about it. Something of the sort was sure to happen sooner or later; and perhaps it is well for him that it has happened sooner rather than later. The amazing indiscretion of which he was guilty when he attended and took part in a conference on National Expenditure in a London hotel fully a fortnight ago—a 'non-political' conference which happened to be attended by none but extreme Radicals and Socialists—is recognized by everybody except himself. And the tactlessness and folly he

displayed in openly and sweepingly denouncing the policy of His Majesty's Government (while holding a responsible office under that Government) has obviously astonished alike his political friends and foes in England—though we do not suppose that anybody in Jamaica, who has had the opportunity of watching his career of ten years here, both as Colonial Secretary and as Governor, will be in the least degree surprised at his conduct. When he filled the position of Colonial Secretary he did not think it unbecoming or undignified to write letters to the newspapers on all sorts of subjects, and even to engage (not always in the best of tempers or with the best taste) in prolonged controversies with the editors; and unfortunately for himself he did not invariably emerge from those encounters with flying colours. During the period of Governorship he was equally indiscreet, though he shifted the arena of impassioned discussion from the Press to the Legislative Council. Of his unseemly passages at arms with the elected members, especially towards the close of his regime, it is unnecessary for us to say anything. Indeed, they are best forgotten. Curiously enough, he did not allow the heads of Departments the same latitude that he had claimed for himself as the head of a Department: though his example naturally was infectious."

The following is of great interest as bearing upon the disaster of the hurricane described in this chapter:—

"Homeless People in Westmoreland.—Can His Excellency the Acting Governor seriously

contend that the promises made by Sir Sydney Olivier after the disaster of November last—and made solemnly, deliberately and repeatedly—have been honestly and honourably fulfilled? Are not the promises of a Governor binding on a Government? If not, then public confidence in the Government can neither be accorded on the one hand, nor expected on the other. Did not Sir Sydney Olivier declare, for example, that the Government would assist the poor people whose houses had been demolished or badly damaged, to get their dwellings restored? That fact can scarcely be disputed. He not only made the statement officially, but he put it in writing. What has been done to give effect to the promise? Are there not hundreds of homeless people in the parish to-day—fully three months after the catastrophe—who have not received a shilling to assist them in restoring their shattered buildings? The Acting Governor has recently paid a visit to the parish, and must have seen for himself the wide-spread destitution and misery that prevail. But what did he say to the Manchester delegation? He said that there were able-bodied men in Westmoreland who had done nothing towards helping themselves—towards putting back the houses that were damaged—and who were apparently waiting for the Government to do everything for them. Was that quite a fair thing to say? Does it square with what the ex-Governor said when he commended the spirit of self-help exhibited by so many of the hurricane sufferers—when he spoke with pride and gratification of the efforts put forth by a large number of the

distressed people to repair their houses without waiting for financial assistance from the Government? Is it in accord with what Sir Sydney must have written to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, seeing that Mr. Harcourt stated in a despatch which was published in this week's official "Gazette," that he desired to express his "appreciation of the spirit of self-reliance displayed by the community as a whole in the face of this disaster"? This is no fanciful tale. It comes from various sources and from men who are incapable of bearing false witness. And every day adds to the miseries—we might almost say, the horrors—of the situation. Never was a disaster in this colony so badly handled. And unfortunately it was bungled and mismanaged from the very first. Sir Sydney Olivier made a mess of a number of things in Jamaica; and he would have made a mess of many more things had he always been permitted to take his own way. But he never made quite so bad a mess of anything as he did of the situation created by the cyclone of 18th November at the west end of the colony."

The next again shows that I was not the only man whose advancement was blocked by this autocrat. However, the gentleman whose name is mentioned, more fortunate than I, came into his own again, for he now occupies the post of Assistant Colonial Secretary.

"But there are some men whose places cannot be filled so easily or successfully as others, even in the hum-drum walks of official life. And we are inclined to think that the Government will

find it extremely difficult to secure a competent successor to Mr. Doorly at any price—and absolutely impossible to fill the vacancy satisfactorily if the miserably inadequate salary which Sir Sydney Olivier insisted on paying the retiring Protector of Immigrants is persisted in. We do not know whether we may not be doing Mr. Doorly a dis-service in referring to the lack of principle which often characterized the ex-Governor's attitude towards public officials. We sincerely hope not. But in the interests of justice, common honesty and administrative efficiency, we feel it our duty to say that Sir Sydney Olivier showed undue preference to some men and undue indifference or antagonism to others—that he sometimes promoted men of mediocre ability to positions of responsibility and high emolument, whilst he kept back much more talented, tactful, industrious, dependable men, who had either neglected to court his favour or had the courage to differ in opinion from him. We know nothing of the personal relations that subsisted between the late Governor and the retiring Protector of Immigrants. But we have no hesitation in saying that Mr. Doorly is one of several capable officials whose abilities were not recognized and whose services were not adequately remunerated during the recent regime."

The last which I shall quote has reference to one of the abortive attempts to bring Sir Sydney Olivier back to Jamaica which were organized by those who had courted his favour. The date is five years later: "Gleaner" of 15th February, 1918.

"The Olivier Movement.—Yesterday afternoon was held the meeting specially summoned by Mr. William Morrison for the purpose of constituting a committee that should further the movement to have Sir Sydney Olivier appointed as Governor of Jamaica on the retirement of His Excellency Sir William Manning."

* * *

"Mr. Morrison said yesterday that some of the movement's opponents held that Sir Sydney Olivier was intellectually arrogant, but that he did not agree with this verdict. We do: we do not merely think, we know that Sir Sydney Olivier is intellectually arrogant. Everything that he did, said or wrote was instinct with intellectual arrogance. But we frankly confess that we are not afraid of this, for we are always prepared to meet arrogance with arrogance, and at no time are we ourselves particularly disposed to assume a humble mien."

And thus I bid adieu to the gentleman who has since risen to heights no doubt undreamt of by him at the time when he was engaged in trampling me and mine into the mire. Yet, in this age of self-assertive democracy the potentialities of such advancement must always have been present to the mind of so eminent a theoretical Socialist. This makes all the more inexplicable his persistent efforts to extirpate, root and branch, such a humble and unimportant being as myself; whose only recommendation was that of having been for many years a loyal, zealous and efficient servant of the colony of Jamaica, and of his own government. However, I make bold to think that

I will now have convinced my readers of the remarkable prophetic vision possessed by the young lady who on that voyage to England in 1901 warned me to "beware of a big, dark man, with a black beard."

*Chapter XV.*THE STORY,—*Continued.*

It now becomes necessary for the story to turn back to July 1904, on the 4th of which month I left Montego Bay to take charge of the parish of St. Elizabeth, with headquarters at Black River. This opened up a little rift in the cloud of financial darkness which had settled on my horizon, as already described; for, there being no quarters in St. Elizabeth, I had in lieu an allowance of £50 a year, and this was equivalent to a corresponding increase in my emoluments, being all alone as I was, and thus able to live in lodgings. That parish of broad acres, the home of good horses and "cattle upon a thousand hills," the inhabitants of which speak of it affectionately as "old St. Bess," was also the headquarters of the Farquharsons—assuredly the best known and most widely distributed white family in Jamaica. The head of the house was then Custos of the parish, and I had for years been on most friendly terms with several members of it. So I had a very pleasant reception from the ruling family; while in a very short time the lower classes had all taken me to their hearts. There was always to me something very lovable about the people of St. Elizabeth. In former days the girls of the parish used to be in very great demand as domestic servants, in Kingston and all over the island, owing to their civility, their cleanliness, and also unquestionably the very excellent training which they them-

selves, or at any rate their parents, had received at the hands of the German Moravian missionaries who used to be scattered in considerable numbers throughout the parish. Their standard of good looks is also above the average. There was scarcely any serious crime; and I was able by constant travelling about remote districts, attending every court, and treating every person of whatever class, with that cast-iron impartiality and straightforwardness on which I pride myself, completely to win their respect, their confidence, and, I do not hesitate to add, their affection. Among the upper classes I had the good fortune to gain the sincere regard and friendship of Mr. C. G. Farquharson, previously unknown to me, a brother of the Custos, who lived and carried on business in Black River. He was truly one in a thousand; and our relations ere long became like those between father and son. His death in England in July 1909 shortly after my return from the compulsory trip which is described in the previous chapter, filled me with a sense of irreparable loss. The only consolation I had was that he left a son worthy of his name.

I remained in St. Elizabeth nearly five years, namely until February 1909, when, as described in the previous chapter, the bombshell of my being ordered to England "forthwith" was dropped on my devoted head; and on my return from that compulsory trip, as is also told above, I found myself transferred to Westmoreland, until June 1913, when I was permitted to go back to "old St. Bess."

I found that my dear good people still cherished me in their hearts. It was very pleasant indeed on market days in the streets of Black River and on the country roads to be met with bows and curtsseys, and

flashing white teeth in faces wreathed with smiles, and to be greeted thus: "Look fe we (our) Inspector come back again." "How you do massa, I really glad fe see you again;" and similar cries of welcome on all sides. The very first Saturday that I spent there, while walking down the street, I met old Father Bennett of Mountainside, a black gentleman who was a landed proprietor and breeder of racehorses. As soon as he saw me he stopped his little two-wheeled trap, jumped out, and came toward me with out-stretched hand, saying "Well, I praise and bless God that I see you walking in the streets of Black River again!" What a contrast to the scowling people I had left just over the Westmoreland border! It was like coming home again.

St. Elizabeth, besides being celebrated for horses, cattle, mules and logwood, also boasts what I think I may safely describe as the largest supply of fresh water to be found in any parish of the island; although this is so unevenly distributed that there are certain districts which periodically suffer from drought of a perfectly paralysing nature. As I have already stated in Chapter II, it possesses the only lake in the island, over a hundred acres in area, and of unfathomable depth. Then it has the beautiful Black River, navigable for about thirty miles of its course, and fed by numerous tributaries. It is formed by the confluence of two streams, one rising in the hills beyond Siloah in the east, and the other at Grosmond in the west. These unite above the village of Lacovia, at which place the lovely Y.S. river joins them. The eastern branch contains the romantic "Maggotty" Falls. (I can never understand why the authorities do not substitute for this odious appella-

tion one worthy of the exquisite beauty of the falls themselves, instead of preserving the present one, which, surely, is only suggestive of putrescence.) Besides all this river system there are some 60,000 acres of fresh water swamp, with a hard limestone bottom, clothed with a luxuriant growth of reeds, rushes, water lilies and large shade trees, and studded with islands inhabited by an amphibious population. These live on fish which costs them nothing; and also on the toll they take of the logwood—which is constantly being conveyed by boat in very large quantities from the properties in the interior down to the town of Black River. The ingenuity which they display in committing these depredations—often in collusion with the boatmen—is sometimes a thing to wonder at. Altogether this piscatorial population may be said to represent the lowest type of the human race to be found in the whole parish. Now and then the alligators take toll of them also. The redeeming feature about them is the use they make of the vast abundance of raw material with which Nature has provided them in the shape of the aquatic growths above described. From these they make those very handy receptacles of varying sizes known as “bankra” baskets. They manufacture large mats, which can be used either as carpets or bedding. They construct hats of the style known as “wha-fe-do” (What-to-do), coarse but serviceable head-covering; also dish-mats and many other useful articles. Nine times out of ten, when you see a man vending any of those which I have named in the streets of Kingston, if you ask him where he comes from he will say “St. Elizabeth.” They carry them all over the island; and I occasionally meet in Kingston some who know me quite well.

Also, you will often see a man driving along the road a donkey with a large cage on its back, made of wood and bark, containing poultry. If you ask him where he comes from the chances are that he will also say "St. Elizabeth."

An interesting ethnological feature is presented by the population of the south-eastern portion of the parish known as the "Savannahs," which runs, roughly speaking, from Great Pedro Bay, about fifteen miles from Black River, over the southerly end of the Santa Cruz Mountains and on to Alligator Pond on the border of Manchester. Throughout the whole of this region a black face used to be the exception; though it is becoming more common of late years. It is said—I know not with what degree of truth—that the inhabitants are the descendants of the old buccaneers, with Arawak blood intermingled; and certainly the physical characteristics of the people give colour to that theory. One finds a well-to-do class of small settlers all over this district, the men and women of fine physique, many of the latter extremely pretty; and a large proportion of very fair—practically white—complexion, with rosy cheeks, blue or brown eyes, and chestnut hair. They live in clean-looking whitewashed houses, built of the limestone of which the whole district consists, and a striking feature of which are the rocky "Kopjies," exactly like the pictures one sees of South Africa. There is one village, named Ballard's Valley, which, viewed from the distance, looks just like a bit of old England picked up and dropped there. The whole countryside is clothed with luxuriant guinea-grass, on which they rear splendid horses and mules, and donkeys not to be matched throughout the island. Their water

supply is derived from wells, some of which are alleged to date back to the days of the Spaniards. These people make very large canoes from the giant cotton-trees up to six or seven tons burden, and they sail them with great skill all the way up to Kingston sometimes, along the rocky and precipitous coast extending from Old Harbour Bay to the south-eastern extremity of the Santa Cruz Mountains. Truth compels one, however, to say that they are as a rule exceedingly ignorant, and uncouth in their manners. The chief amusements of the men are horse-racing, and the consumption of large quantities of rum, with the inevitable concomitants of fighting and disorderly conduct; while those of the gentler sex do not differ in any marked degree from the diversions of their darker-skinned sisters.

During the war I once went through that district with a recruiting party, along with an officer of the local forces and a doctor, accompanied by the drums and fifes of the Kingston Infantry Militia. We travelled in four motor cars; and our progress created such a panic that practically the entire adult male population fled to the woods. The ladies however, stood their ground, and faced us right womanfully—if I may coin a fitting word; but of course we were not out to raise a corps of Amazons. We got no recruits.

In the Santa Cruz Mountains, which rise to an elevation of 2,000 feet, St. Elizabeth possesses a climate unrivalled throughout the island for its equable temperature and hygienic benefit to persons suffering from, or threatened with, pulmonary disease. The chief inconvenience of residence there is the entire absence of any supply of water, with exception

of that which falls from the skies. This necessitates the careful storage of it in tanks; and in seasons of prolonged drought, such as now occur with increasing frequency, life in that mountain region is far from being a picnic.

In Chapter II I have drawn attention to the curious fact that all the rivers, salt ponds and lagoons on the south side of the island contain numerous alligators—or, properly speaking, crocodiles—while on the north there are none. These saurians were common in the Black River; and two or three used often to be seen swimming about the harbour. Sometimes they invaded the back yards of the houses lining the beach, and took away ducks and dogs. On two occasions I shot one with a carbine from the main road along the sea wall, quite near to the courthouse; close enough for the men who were following me to pick them up from their canoes and bring them ashore before they had time to sink. These two were, however, only youthful specimens; but I once had a most unusual adventure with an adult of the species in the main street of the town of Black River, in this wise:—At 2 o'clock in the morning of Easter Sunday, 1907, I was awakened by a constable knocking at the window of my bedroom. In reply to my question he told me that he had been on duty in the street when a large alligator had made its appearance from the sea, coming in by an alley-way leading under Mr. Buckland's house to the beach, apparently in pursuit of a dog which belonged to a Chinese shopkeeper living on the other side of the street; that some boatmen, seeing it, had closed the door by which it had entered, thus cutting off its retreat; had lassoed it with a strong hemp rope, tied it hand and foot, and sent him to beg me to

come and shoot it. I at once flew out of bed and drew on some clothing, instructing the man to hurry round to the police station, get a few cartridges from the sergeant-major, and meet me at the spot where the captive alligator was, with his carbine. I then went out myself into the night; and I can never forget the indescribable beauty of it. It is a large order I know: but I have never seen such brilliant moonlight. The sky was simply ablaze with it; and such stars as its brightness allowed to be seen glowed like points of argent fire in the absolutely cloudless azure canopy above. And over land and sea hung a breathless hush, broken only by the gentle lapping of wavelets on the beach. The beauty of the night was so overwhelming and entrancing that I almost forgot the object of my mission. One could have picked up a pin on the street. I can envisage that night now.

However, sternly tearing myself away from the witchery of it, I soon reached the place where the captive alligator was lying; and there, as is usual on such nights, when many black people of the lower orders never seem to go to bed at all, I saw a small crowd assembled, who gave me a warm welcome. I found the alligator to be a formidable looking beast—nine feet six inches long as we afterwards ascertained—and the boatmen had certainly secured him in no uncertain manner on the piazza of Mr. Buckland's shop. The only part of his body that could move was the extremity of his tail; and with that dangerous weapon he was thrashing the pavement from side to side. Up to that time I had always regarded the alligator as a dumb animal; but this one certainly was not. He protested in very strong alligator language

against the treatment to which he was being subjected. My constable having arrived with the carbine and ammunition, I made the men seize the rope and drag the beast along the street westward until we came to the open beach, where the houses cease. Arrived there I put one bullet, holding the carbine vertically, through his spinal vertebrae just behind the head, and another through his brain by way of the eyes. Those gave him his quietus; but these animals are notoriously hard to kill, the only vulnerable spots being the eye, which forms a very minute target, and the comparatively soft skin of the belly where the forelegs join the body; through this the shot may reach the heart. But they are very cold-blooded creatures, and muscular action continues for a considerable time after life is practically extinct. I once shot one almost in the streets of Morant Bay on a Sunday afternoon in a small creek flowing across the road. On that occasion I had a large audience, but not any assistance from them. I put six Martini-Henry bullets into him; and when he appeared to have received his *coup de grace* I jumped into the water, seized him by the tail, and dragged him as far out on the bank as I could. As soon as I did that, half-a-dozen of the bolder spirits came to my aid; we pulled him ashore, turned him over on his back, and measured his length and girth, afterwards placing him again belly downwards. No sooner had we done so than he appeared to recover, and started for the water. But on that occasion I had with me, besides the carbine, my gun, both barrels loaded with No. 4 shot. Placing the muzzle within an inch of his eye I pulled both triggers at once; and that finished him. But the stampede among the spectators when

he began to make tracks for the water was very diverting.

I had the Black River saurian skinned as he lay on the beach, and afterwards the john crows and the sharks had the time of their lives. Sharks come in there very near to the shore: in fact at one time it used to be said of Black River that a fight in the streets between a shark and an alligator was a common sight. Foul calumny! I had that skin very nicely tanned; and I ultimately sold it to the captain of a Norwegian logwood barque.

On my return to St. Elizabeth in 1913 I found that the various trials which I had endured in Westmoreland for four years, superadded to the malaria-laden atmosphere of Savanna-la-Mar, were threatening to undermine my hitherto vigorous constitution. Without being laid up, I simply began to waste away, losing weight, and suffering from painful and unpleasant cutaneous eruptions. At last my friend, Dr. James Calder, told me that if I valued my life I must get away from the island at any cost, even only for a sea voyage if I could not afford, owing to the treatment I had received at the hands of the government, to go to England and stay there for a change. Again I received the help of my sympathetic St. Elizabeth friends; and through the kindness of the Atlantic Fruit Company, who made special rates for me, I was enabled to take a trip to Rotterdam and back, in the steamer *Siberia*, which was at that time engaged in carrying bananas for the company to that well known Dutch port. I travelled by train to Port Antonio and embarked there on the 24th May, 1914. The *Siberia* was a German ship, and all her officers and crew were of that nationality, with exception of a gang of Ja-

maica negro firemen. She was a slow old tub; but as I was out for the sea voyage only I did not mind that; and being at sea never bores me, as I am a stranger to sea-sickness. There were a few other passengers from Jamaica; but the captain, the purser, and other officers made a great deal of me as soon as they discovered my familiarity with their language. On the return voyage I had the ship all to myself; and these good Teutons redoubled their attentions to me. The chief officer, who, strangely enough, bore the ominous name of Paul Kruger, was a very good fellow, more like an Englishman in physical appearance and manner than any of his messmates. He told me that he had two aunts married to English engineers in Newcastle-on-Tyne, and knew that town well. The captain was a typical Prussian; a very tall man, standing about six feet three, of dark complexion, with a long black beard falling half-way down his chest, and a most ferocious moustache. He was as nice to me as he knew how; but it used to amuse me to hear him describe the degenerate condition into which, he alleged, the British mercantile marine had fallen. It so chanced that until we entered the English channel we encountered only two tramps flying the red ensign. All the other ships we saw carried the German or American flag. According to this captain there were scarcely any British ships left; and those that there were had German captains. "The days are now past," he declaimed in his most sonorous German, "when England ruled the seas." He restrained himself considerably though, and relapsed into rather reflective mood when, just off Portsmouth, we ran into a squadron of battleships and cruisers,

grim monsters all, engaged in manoeuvres, and saw the flashes of some of their guns so far away on the horizon that no sound was audible. It was a beautiful, though slightly misty day; the Channel was smooth as a mill-pond; and the sight was one to send British blood coursing through the veins with a faster flow. The day happened to be my fifty-eighth birthday; and I learnt later that my own youngest boy had been on board one of those very ships at which I gazed with such pride and pleasure. This was of course just two months less two days before England declared war on Germany; and I have often wondered since whether the haughty Prussian knew what was coming. At any rate, on his next voyage to Jamaica he received a rude reminder of the fact that old England still ruled the waves; for he had to flee for dear life into the harbour of Norfolk, Virginia—the nearest neutral port—in order to avoid capture by a British cruiser. This so upset him that he was compelled to take refuge in a hospital; where, I was informed, he spent some weeks before recovering his normal condition.

The voyage up Channel was most interesting; old England on the port hand, just beginning to clothe herself with the full glory of summer, and the “stately homes of England” peeping out from their beautiful environment of ancient trees and gardens. I must confess to having gazed on it with eyes moistened by grief at my inability to set foot on those sacred shores. We arrived at Rotterdam on the night of the 7th June; and on the following day I quitted the ship, as she was going down river to coal, and took up my quarters at the Victoria hotel. I had stayed in that

same hotel forty-three years previously, for one night, while on my way from England to school in Germany, at the age of fifteen.

Leaving Rotterdam on the 10th June, we arrived in Kingston, after a calm and uneventful voyage, on which I was the only passenger, on the 30th; and I at once returned to resume my duties in St. Elizabeth, almost rejuvenated. I ought to say that my lines were now cast in much more pleasant places, owing to the fact that I had been able again to acquire the means of travelling in a wheeled vehicle, through having had charge, for six months each in three consecutive years, of Hanover in conjunction with Westmoreland. Naturally the most absorbing event of 1914 was the outbreak of the Great War, which occurred just a month after my return to Black River.

In this I was more deeply interested than any other man in Jamaica; as all of my five sons were then serving in the forces of the Empire: two being in the Royal Garrison Artillery, one in the Royal Marine Light Infantry, one in an Indian regiment, and the youngest a midshipman on board H.M.S. *Colossus* of the First Battle Squadron. The last named was early in 1915 transferred to the Royal Naval Air Service, in which he remained until the formation of the Royal Air Force. He then elected to join that corps, and served with it until the end of the war, without a scratch; only, after nearly three years of peace, to perish in August 1921, in the disaster which overtook Airship R38 at Hull. Three of his elder brothers had fallen on the field of battle; and the names of two of them are engraven on the chapel

wall of the Jamaica College, and the cenotaph at Wolmer's School, respectively. But, as he had sunk a German submarine in the North Sea with all hands—for which he received the Distinguished Flying Cross—I did not owe the Germans anything when the Armistice came. Our debt had been paid with usurious interest. This youngest one, my Benjamin, was described by Major Scott—the man who took R34 to America and back in 1920—to a "Daily Mail" reporter as "the finest airship officer in the British service." In his last term at Dartmouth College he had been awarded the King's Medal and dirk. Naval officers will know what that signifies.

As a matter of course I offered my services to the Governor at once, stressing the point that even if I were thought too old for the firing line, my knowledge of the German language would render me useful in some other capacity; but my offer was never accepted. I was later informed by Lieutenant Ottley, our Staff Officer, that General Blackden, then commanding the troops, had wished to place me in charge of the camp which was formed for the internment of German prisoners at Up Park Camp; and Major Peel, R.M.L.I., (who belonged to the same corps as my second son, and knew him well), told me that he, as Naval Intelligence Officer, had asked permission to employ me in his department. He said that he would have sent me either to Central America or San Francisco; at which latter place, as those familiar with the history of the war will remember, a very powerful conspiracy against the British government was unearthed, organized chiefly by East Indians, Germans, and Irishmen. But I was never permitted to do any-

thing outside of my local police duties. Some of the younger officers of the force were allowed to go to the front; and this created a shortage by which I ultimately benefited, from a material point of view.

One pleasant recollection which I cherish of those days is that of a little function which took place in the Black River courthouse on my 60th birthday, the 6th June, 1916. It happened to be the day of the Resident Magistrate's Court, presided over by His Honour Mr. W. P. Clark, who invariably accorded me his valuable support and assistance in the discharge of my duties. Shortly before the hour for the luncheon interval operations were suspended, and Mr. Clark in a cordial speech pronounced a sincere eulogium on me, accompanied by a touching reference to my sons, and the death of the eldest—he being so far the only one killed—and concluded by wishing me many happy returns, with a hearty handshake. The Clerk of Courts and the solicitors present followed in similar strain; and after my reply we adjourned downstairs to the office of the Clerk of Courts, where I found that some thoughtful friend had provided a bottle of champagne wherewith to drink my health.

Very soon after England's declaration of war I came into contact with it through a batch of Germans who had shipped as seamen on a Norwegian barque coming from Santos in Brazil, in ballast, to load logwood at Black River. It had been very difficult for the unfortunate captain to get a crew in Santos, owing to disease and desertion; and it had not taken him long to find out that not one of these men was a sailor. What they really wanted was to get to a British port, so that they might be arrested and interned, and thus



Photo by Cleary and Elliott

THE AUTHOR, AGED 60.

escape the horrors of war. They deliberately took a boat, and landed on one of the wharves at Black River soon after the ship dropped anchor at the ballast ground. I had been warned of their approach; and when they arrived, after putting a few questions to them—in German, much to their astonishment—I arrested the lot, seven altogether, sending them on to Kingston by escort on the next day but one. The chief man among them had been a non-commissioned officer in a Saxon rifle regiment, and a commercial clerk in Brazil. He was very nice-looking, had charming manners, and spoke English perfectly; also, he was very content with the fate that had befallen him. He wrote me two or three times from the internment camp; but later he must have been sent to Halifax along with the other prisoners, and I never heard from him again during the war. But, to my great surprise, some time in 1923 I received from him a letter dated at Munich, in Bavaria, asking me to send him an official certificate to the effect that he had been arrested and interned in Jamaica while trying to make his way home to Germany in order to rejoin his regiment! In the letter was enclosed some German paper money, the value of which I never ascertained—if it had any; therefore I cannot say whether it was intended as a bribe for me, or merely to pay postage for my reply. So I simply wrote to the effect that he had been arrested and interned on landing in Jamaica from a foreign vessel flying the flag of a neutral country, and posted it to him, with his German money enclosed, at the expense of the Jamaica taxpayer. The whole episode affords another luminous illustration of German mentality. I have forgotten to state that he said, in the most naïve manner,

that he desired to have my certificate for the purpose of obtaining some additional compensation money from the government of his country.

In the year 1919, at the age of 63, I was placed in charge of the police of Manchester, as I have already stated, in addition to St. Elizabeth; and from that date onwards, up to very nearly the end of my service, I was in command of two divisions at a time.

I took over Manchester just at the time when the Jamaica war contingent was returning to the island, battalion by battalion, to be demobilized. There had been a good deal of unpleasantness—in some cases amounting to mutiny—while these troops were quartered in idleness at Taranto in Italy, awaiting transportation; and some person or persons had scared our government into the belief that as soon as all the men of the Jamaica contingent returned home a deliberately planned and organised rebellion would break out, through their agency. The effect of this was the issuing of special orders to the police directing that certain precautionary measures be taken. Later on, while the first batch was actually on the water, some other scaremonger gained the ear of the authorities with further and more detailed information, actually giving the names and addresses of the ringleaders of the threatened rising.

I must pause here to remark on, and call attention to, the paradox that although His Excellency Sir Sydney Olivier had left it on record that I was unfit for further advancement in the public service, since that gentleman's departure from the colony, the government has several times done me the honour of asking for my opinion, and the benefit of my knowledge and experience, on important matters affecting

the public welfare falling within my purview. I have already quoted in Chapter IV the case of *The Negro World*; a second will be found in the chapter dealing with the Maroons; while the matter now under discussion forms a third example of the estimation in which I was held. There are others. This case was deemed to be of such importance, and of so strictly confidential a nature, that the documents involved were not even entrusted to the post office, but placed in the hands of a constable to be delivered to me personally at Balaclava railway station, on my way to Mandeville to take charge of Manchester in May 1919. I took the papers with me; studied and pondered them for several hours; then wrote a minute reviewing the probabilities of the whole situation, every word of which was completely verified by subsequent events. This reply I, of course, also forwarded to the Inspector General by special messenger. I may forestall the narrative at this point by describing the action which I afterwards took with regard to the man whose name had been mentioned as the head of the whole alleged revolutionary movement. He was at the time resident in Manchester; so, hearing of his being in Mandeville one day, (I had a look-out kept for him,) I sent my sergeant-major and detective to invite him to my office. On arrival I found him to be a good-looking black man, of fine physique, well educated, and highly intelligent. I gave him a chair, and then proceeded to interview him *tête-a-tête* for about quarter of an hour in an impressive manner. I think my last words to him were that I should be very sorry to see a man of his calibre dangling at the end of a rope; but that such was the fate undoubtedly awaiting him if half what we had heard about him,

was true. He left my office in a properly subdued and humble spirit; and I need hardly say that the whole story of the projected rising proved to be a bogey, exactly as I had predicted in my report.

The first detachment of returning soldiers arrived on a day in May, 1919, prior to my taking charge of Manchester; and Balaclava railway station was the point at which all those belonging to interior St. Elizabeth, Manchester, and Upper Trelawny were to be paid off and disbanded. In pursuance of my confidential instructions I took the precaution of moving every man who could possibly be spared from the other stations in the parish—including Black River—up to Balaclava station during the previous night and the small hours of the morning; while I myself spent the night there. We had organized a reception for the men, of which Mr. F. C. Tomlinson, then member of the Legislative Council for St. Elizabeth, Mr. F. B. Bowen, the veteran Clerk of the Parochial Board, myself and a couple of other gentlemen formed the committee. The good people of Balaclava had all subscribed to provide lunch, soft drinks, and cigarettes, etc. (I may say that they did the same on each subsequent occasion, until I came to their help with subscriptions which I raised for them in Black River and other parts of the parish.) The courthouse, at which the reception was to take place, was decorated with flags and flowers; and we awaited, not without a certain amount of anxiety, the *denouement* of this entirely unprecedented event in the history of Jamaica. The day being Saturday too, there was a very large crowd of country people attending the market, which is a very important one; and this was an additional factor in our uneasiness. At length,

about noon, the whistle of the approaching special train was heard; and it presently steamed in, swarming with khaki-clad men to the number of four or five hundred. Although the police station, which lies at the other end of the village from the railway, was full of constables prepared for any emergency and all standing by, the only members of the force whom the soldiers saw were myself and my two sergeants. As soon as the train stopped, I went on board, making my way from carriage to carriage, ostensibly enquiring for the officers, but really on the alert to ascertain the feeling prevailing among the men. It did not take me long to convince myself that there was nothing in their hearts but joy and pleasure at being once more at home.

Most of the St. Elizabeth men knew me, as also did some of those belonging to Westmoreland, who were to go on as far as Montpelier station. I found several acquaintances too among the officers. The St. Elizabeth, Trelawny and Manchester men detrained as rapidly as possible, and we marched them, to the number of about two hundred, to the courthouse, where they fell to with great gusto on the refreshments. As soon as the inner man had been satisfied, and My Lady Nicotine assumed her sway, the two gentlemen named above gave short speeches welcoming the men back to their native land; and these were followed by an address from myself. I found that I enjoyed great prestige among them on account of my sons' deaths in the war, which they knew all about. In fact, I discovered that five of them had actually been engaged in serving ammunition to the heavy battery of artillery which my third son had commanded; one of them, indeed, having formerly been my own

groom. They told me that he and his gunners had given them a royal time, and they had been very sorry to leave his part of the line.

So the afternoon passed very pleasantly, if rather hilariously; until by five o'clock we had dispatched to their respective destinations, by means of a fleet of motor cars and other vehicles, all those whose homes lay within our district, without a single untoward incident. I made a very full report of the whole episode, to the great pleasure and satisfaction of the Hon. J. H. W. Park, then Director of Public Works, who had charge of the demobilization. The result was that I received orders to proceed—no matter where I was, or what I was doing, either in St. Elizabeth or Manchester—to Balaclava immediately on being notified by wire, and receive each batch of returning soldiers. This I never failed to do, sometimes at great personal inconvenience. On one occasion, when the transport arrived in Kingston five days before she was expected, I, being at Mandeville, just had time to fly down to Williamsfield railway station in my buggy, driving furiously, and catch the special train there at 8 a.m., travelling with the men to Balaclava. Having dispatched them all, I had to kick my heels in Balaclava until the arrival of the train returning from Montego Bay that night. I eventually reached my quarters in Mandeville at 3 o'clock the following morning. One of the days on which a detachment was due to arrive was the 3rd June, the King's birthday, and a public holiday, on which practically all the shops would be closed. The very great inconvenience—and possibly danger—which this would entail was so obvious to me that on arriving at Balaclava the day before, I took upon myself to

go round to all the shopkeepers and tell them that while I had no power to give them permission to open on a public holiday, if any of them should choose to do so I would not prosecute them. That was the kind of thing I was never afraid to do on my own responsibility. All the shops opened up; the men strolled about the village making their purchases and enjoying themselves generally; and no questions were ever asked about it. If any had been, I feel certain that I should have been exonerated, and allowed to leave the court without a stain on my character.

It is no wonder that those "contingents" as they call themselves, of "old St. Bess" used to speak of me as their "father." (Some of them occasionally come around me even in Kingston at this day.) They used to bring their troubles of all kinds to me, and ask my advice and assistance. I did all manner of things for them. One lad on returning home found, to his great grief, that his mother—who must have been a very loose character—had left her house in company with a man, a stranger to the district, and gone no one knew whither. He sought my assistance; and by means of painstaking and persistent enquiry I at length succeeded in locating her and the man in the Blue Mountain Valley in the parish of St. Thomas. He went there, and insisted on bringing her home again; while through my sergeant at Santa Cruz he sent me this message:—"Give Inspector Thomas my eternal gratitude."

In another case I was instrumental in obtaining for an almost destitute widow woman a sum of money amounting to upwards of £10, which had been remitted to her in respect of her son, but could not be delivered owing to her name—a Scotch one—having

been misspelt. It had been corrupted—as so many names are—and written phonetically, owing to, perhaps, pardonable ignorance on the part of clerks in the Paymaster's office and the local postmistress. The old lady was brought to me one day in a remote mountain district by two or three neighbours who had actually provided her with clothes for the occasion. I wrote the Army Pay Officer for the papers; and on receipt of them, with that linguistic intuition which I possess, I solved the problem in five minutes; convinced the Paymaster of the old lady's identity; and promptly received a big cheque to hand to her. Her gratitude was something touching to witness; it was more than an ample reward for any trouble I had taken in the matter.

From first to last the demobilization of the St. Elizabeth detachment of the Jamaica war contingent was achieved without any difficulty or unpleasantness.

Shortly after the Armistice our gallant Colonel, whose term as Inspector General had been unduly prolonged on account of the war, finally retired from the command of the force; and his place was taken in 1919 by Mr. W. E. Clark. I have mentioned this gentleman in connection with the Montego Bay riots, and again in my account of the Westmoreland hurricane, referring to him as having been promoted over my head while twelve years junior to me. He had not occupied the post of Deputy Inspector General very long before being promoted to command the police of the little island of Barbados; whence he was sent to British Guiana; and finally back to Jamaica, his native land, as Inspector General, in 1919, all through some mysterious influence. It will be my

painful duty in the next chapter to describe how badly he too, like so many other people with whom I have come into contact, went back on me at the very end of my career.

I had hoped to end my days in the service among my dear St. Elizabeth people; but after spending over seven years with them on my second sojourn in the parish—making a total of twelve altogether—I was engineered out of it in 1921, through the wiles of another “snake in the grass.” This person, having behaved towards me with the duplicity which, as I afterwards learnt, was well known to be his leading characteristic, I wrote him a letter expressing my opinion of his conduct, and also the hope that some day I might have the opportunity of getting even with him. The Governor at that juncture was Sir Leslie Probyn. This person made complaint to His Excellency that I had threatened to kill him, and the latter judged it a proper precaution to obviate the possibility of my committing such a meritorious act as that would have been by removing me from St. Elizabeth. Accordingly the fiat went forth that as from the 10th January 1921 I was to be placed in charge of the two parishes of Westmoreland and Hanover combined. I was very sorry to leave “old St. Bess;” but I could not close my eyes to the fact that my new command had the effect of increasing my emoluments by about fifty per cent., thus rendering it possible for me to make some further provision for my old age; I being then nearly sixty-five, which is the period of compulsory retirement from the service.

It was at this time that I realised the extent to which I had succeeded in winning the affections of the inhabitants of the parish. When the news of my

impending departure was announced, addresses of farewell came pouring in, from Black River, and from the innermost recesses of the country in every direction. The signatories of these were not, with three or four individual exceptions, persons of my own social class. They were small settlers, schoolmasters, butchers, bakers, artisans of every kind, shop-keepers, commercial clerks, headmen on properties, tailors, shoemakers, and even wharf labourers. Most of these were published in the *Gleaners* of December 1920, and January 1921. There were eleven of them all told. And it was not always the addresses alone that reached me, either.

Then there was a public farewell at the last court I attended at Malvern in the Santa Cruz Mountains, at which the Custos, the Hon. A. E. Harrison, the Resident Magistrate, and the one solicitor present, made valedictory speeches, eulogising me in a manner which brought the blush of modesty to my cheek. Following that, two of the Mandeville solicitors practising regularly in the Saint Elizabeth courts, who had not been present on the occasion, wrote a joint letter to the "*Gleaner*" in which they expressed their regret for their absence, and for my removal; praising me, among other things, as the most *tactful* police officer they had ever known. (Reader, please note the italics.) Thus I went up out of St. Elizabeth in a blaze of glory, like a rocket; but came down like the stick in Westmoreland three years later. The closing scenes will be described in the next chapter, which is entitled *The End of the Story*.

I have thus devoted more space to my sojourn in St. Elizabeth than to that in any other parish: first, because I spent more of my life there than in any

other place; and, second, because of my desire to submit, as promised in Chapter XIII, as strong proof as possible of the want of "tact and discretion" by which His Excellency Sir Sydney Olivier adjudged me to be unfit to command the police of Kingston. My readers will now be able to form their own judgment on that point; and I can only express the hope that I have not bored them too much.

In the introductory chapter of this book I have regretted the fact that there are now so few witnesses living of many of the events narrated. But as far as my work in St. Elizabeth is concerned, and my relations with the inhabitants of that parish, I may, I think, safely rely on the testimony of the Hon. A. E. Harrison, Custos, and of the Hon. P. W. Sangster, who now represents it in the Legislative Council. The latter himself in person presented me publicly at Mountainside with one of the addresses which are described above.

Chapter XVI.

THE END OF THE STORY.

In January, 1921, I once more assumed command of the Westmoreland division of Police. Combined with it was the parish of Hanover, of which I had previously had charge no fewer than seven times, commencing as a Sub-Inspector in 1883. Little did I think then that I was doomed to undergo the humiliation of terminating a service of close on half a century in the smallest and least important parish in the island, through malice, injustice and tyranny, aggravated by perfidy and cowardice, in high places; that is to say by being deprived of the command of Westmoreland, and relegated to that of little Hanover alone, as will presently appear.

I have already given in a previous chapter some description of Savanna-la-Mar; but I think a few more touches are necessary to complete the picture, as well as some further stories illustrative of Westmoreland psychology, before detailing the various events incident to my second sojourn in that parish.

The police station, whose destruction by fire will in due course be described, was so situated and constructed as not only to undermine the physical constitution, but to destroy the *morale* of any man condemned to live in it. It was bounded on two sides by the mangrove swamp which has already been described; while the wall surrounding it was not calculated to present the least obstacle to any healthy

adult desirous of leaving or entering it otherwise than by the gate. The daily average of the sick list used to be far in excess of that of any other police station in the island. The powers that be once made an attempt at screening it with wire gauze; but the only effect that produced was to intensify the already intolerable heat; while in twelve months the poisonous nature of the atmosphere had so affected the wire gauze—which was of iron—that one could break it off and crumble it up like a biscuit with the naked hand.

Great George Street, the pride of the inhabitants, besides being the hottest spot in Jamaica, in which not even a cat could find shelter in the day-time, is by night wrapped in a darkness which can be felt, when there is no moon. No attempt to light it had ever been made; and this fact, combined with the proximity of the mangrove swamp into which the business part of the town fades away on two sides causes this thoroughfare to afford unparalleled facilities for the concealment of criminals, and for obliteration of the traces of crime. This has a most important bearing on the subject of the fires which will later be discussed. It should also be noted that this mile of street had to be guarded by only two men. The progressive and enlightened spirit of the community throughout the lapse of over a century and a half is forcibly illustrated by the fact that it never occurred to anyone until 1923 to plant trees along this street, and thus convert it into a shady avenue, the delight of which would amply offset the natural disadvantages under which the town labours.

A similar attitude is manifested towards the Manning's Free School, founded at the beginning

of the eighteenth century by the only public-spirited man whom the parish has ever produced—with one exception in recent years. Although it has always been the home of sugar nabobs, there never has been such a thing as an endowed scholarship, or any other benefit, as far as I know, conferred on this important educational institution by any wealthy inhabitant of the parish. It has to thank the wisdom of that shining light among Jamaica Governors, Sir Anthony Musgrave, for being in a healthy condition to-day.

Savanna-la-Mar is the only town in the island where the practice of removing houses from one spot to another, with all its attendant barbarity, still prevails. That means the transportation of wooden dwellings, entire, consisting of one or two rooms, along the streets of the town, and the roads adjoining it. It is done by men who make a regular business of it, on low trucks with very strong wheels, on to which the houses are raised with jacks. This operation is invariably performed on a moonlight night, and it is the unfailing signal for the assembling of a gang of anything from fifty to three hundred of the lowest rabble of the town to attend it. As the result the night is made hideous and sleep impossible for decent people within the radius of half a mile at least, until past midnight, by singing, bawling, and profane and indecent language, with sometimes a fight thrown in. The owner of the house to be removed always comes to the Inspector of Police to announce his intention and ask permission. I could only pretend to grant it, as I had no power to refuse it, there being no specific section of the Towns and Communities Act, or of any other law, bearing on this particular point. The only way in which we

could get at them was by prosecuting them for obstructing the thoroughfare, when, as occasionally used to happen, the removal from some cause or the other was not completed during the night, and the house was left standing in the street or road, thus rendering it impassable for vehicles.

There is a Citizens' Association in the town, which regards itself as a very enlightened and progressive institution, but I have never heard of its approaching the government with a view to the enactment of legislation for the abolition of this barbarous relic of the days of slavery; although it is vociferous enough with regard to matters far less essential to the common decencies of a civilized community. On more than one night have I gone out at or past midnight, when the disgraceful disturbance which I have described had reached a point at which it was no longer tolerable, and single-handed put a stop to the disgusting orgy by sheer force of my personal prestige. I carried a deadly bludgeon in my hand and a loaded revolver in my pocket; and there was one occasion in 1923 when the necessity for my resorting to the use of one or both of these weapons hung in the balance for several tense minutes; but my moral ascendancy prevailed, and the resistance of the ruffianly crowd expended itself in blood-curdling threats of what would happen to me "the next time."

Among minor distinctions Savanna-la-Mar enjoys that of having more lies contributed to the columns of the daily press than any other place that I know of. And now for a couple of further studies in psychology:—There is a well known sugar estate called Shrewsbury, about seven miles from Savanna-la-Mar, the attorney and overseer of which for many

years has been a gentleman who is the brother-in-law of the present Custos of the parish. He has since become the owner of the property. He is, of course, a Justice of the Peace. I had known him and been on very friendly terms with him for years before I was first sent to Westmoreland in 1909; so I received rather a shock on my first visit to this estate at seeing a large signboard over the entrance to the works bearing in white letters on a black ground this inscription:—"NO POLICE ALLOWED IN HERE." I naturally asked the gentleman for some explanation of this unseemly exhibition; and he informed me that the detachment of police at Whithorn, the nearest station, about two miles away, were such a rotten lot that he would not have any of them on his property at all. I also gathered that my predecessor had not been *persona grata* with him. Very shortly afterwards one of my men at Whithorn station, being out on the very important duty of serving jury notices for the approaching Circuit Court was passing through the estate when he saw in a canefield adjoining the road an employé of the property who was one of the jurors. He thereupon very rightly entered the canefield and served the jury notice on the party to whom it was addressed. As soon as the overseer was informed of this, he issued proceedings against the constable for trespass!! I employed a solicitor to defend the case, and at the hearing the Resident Magistrate not only dismissed the charge, but also awarded the constable's costs against the complainant. The latter appealed to the Supreme Court against this decision; and the treatment which his appeal received there, at the hands of Mr. Justice Beard, was that it was sent flying out of the Court,

dismissed with the scorn and ignominy which it deserved, and the costs of the appeal added to those originally granted. Of course I had reported to the government every detail of this case and obtained their sanction for all the steps taken in defence of the constable. The offensive notice however remained in its place over the gate of the works; but instead of peremptorily ordering this Justice of the Peace who had placed it there instantly to remove it on pain of being deprived of his commission, Sir Sydney Olivier, with that tender regard for the feelings of the general public which underlay so many of his actions, sent the Inspector General to coax the gentleman into taking it down. The latter yielded to the Colonel's blandishments, and the sign disappeared. I should have dearly liked to see a real he-man—to use an expressive Americanism—like Sir James Alexander Swettenham deal with the situation. In connection with these circumstances I cannot refrain from paying tribute to the memory of the solicitor who conducted the whole case against the police. He was a brother of the present Custos, and also a brother-in-law of the hero of this story; but in striking contrast to his relatives he was one of the hearts of gold which I have come across here and there in my career. Many a time did he help this lame dog over a stile at the blackest period of the dog's life; and his sudden and premature death in 1919 caused me, I think, a more acute pang than anyone else outside of his own immediate family circle. While the case was still pending I asked him one day how he could have the cheek to go on with it. This was his reply:—"My dear Thomas, my profession is my livelihood; and if I have a brother-in-law who is fool enough to

insist on my prosecuting an utterly impossible case against my advice, and willing to pay me whatever I choose to ask him for doing so, I should be as big a fool as he is to refuse, shouldn't I?" I may say that the central figure of this story took his medicine with a very good grace, and he did not permit the incident to interrupt our friendly relations in the slightest degree. I frequently enjoyed his hospitality during my stay in the parish, both at that period and again when I returned to it in 1921—up to the last three months of 1923. Indeed, he used frequently to embarrass me by protesting to me, and to other persons in my hearing, that I was far and away the finest police officer in the island. How suddenly and completely he stripped off this mask at the end of 1923 will be duly described in a later portion of this chapter. I am inclined to attribute this change of front to the failure of a second attack on the police which he delivered about the middle of 1923. He then deliberately charged a sergeant and a corporal of mine with acting as recruiting agents on behalf of two men, whose names he gave, in collecting labourers for sugar estates in Cuba. The Inspector General requested the Clerk of Courts, Mr. W. O. Reid, to hold a sworn enquiry into this very serious complaint, and the gentleman was duly notified of the date and the hour, and invited to appear before it, with his witnesses. Although the proceedings were delayed for an hour in the hope that he would attend them, he failed to put in his appearance, and the charge against my men was dismissed. The two parties who had been named as principals in the recruiting campaign were present, however, and they both declared on oath that the allegation was entirely false, and

devoid of any foundation whatsoever. This gentleman must however have found consolation for these two failures in the success of the attack which he, in conjunction with his august brother-in-law, the Custos, made on me shortly afterwards. But the most amazing story of all I have kept for the last. Here it is:—

In the latter part of the year 1911, a certain black man resident in Savanna-la-Mar, who was, among other things, an elected member of the Parochial Board, committed an indiscretion which laid him open to prosecution at the hands of the gentleman who has since become Custos of the parish. This resulted in his being placed in custody of the police late on a Saturday night, before any report of the circumstances had been made to me. He was then sent over to my quarters about twelve o'clock, with the view of being locked up for the remainder of the night. This I declined to do, saying that the party in question was a man of substance, not likely to abscond, and that he could quite as effectively be proceeded against by summons.

I mention this for the reason that this man had a very short time previously made a complaint against me to Sir Sydney Olivier which had absolutely no foundation in fact. I had completely refuted it "by first intent," as the doctors say; but His Excellency, with that merciful consideration for the feelings of persons outside of the public service, which I have indicated above, had refrained from telling the man that I had proved him to be a perverter of the truth; but instead, permitted him to continue the correspondence in an abusive strain, and to extend the scope of it by declaring, among other malignant falsehoods, that I was "a member of the Clarke

clique," and that therefore the truth was not in me; and no fair dealing could be expected of me, etc., etc. The Governor referred every one of these libellous epistles to me "for explanation," and with each "explanation" I further convicted the writer of gross and flagrant untruthfulness. But it will not surprise those who have read in previous chapters of the policy of the Illustrious Fabian towards me to learn that although this futile correspondence was permitted to drag on for some three months, he never at any time did me the common justice of telling me that I had completely vindicated myself. (I do not know what he said to my accuser, although I was entitled to be informed of that also.) Therefore, my refusing to lock up this man for the night, and ordering him instead to be released from custody, came as a most pleasant surprise to him. No doubt he could not escape the reflection of how he would have dealt with me had the positions been reversed. For some years afterwards he appeared to evince a feeling of gratitude towards me; and at his trial his counsel made a strong and much applauded point of my magnanimity on this occasion. I have however had recent evidence of the fact that his gratitude has proved quite as evanescent an emotion with him as it is with the majority of his race.

On the Monday following his arrest proceedings were initiated against this man which I regarded at the time—and still regard—as of an unnecessarily severe and vindictive nature, under a law which precluded the infliction of any pecuniary penalty as punishment for his offence.

A simple summons for trespass would have served the purpose equally well, and would have averted the

unsavoury scandal and sensation, aggravated by a good deal of racial animosity, which now resulted. It would also have prevented the victim from posing as a martyr. However, the prosecutor elected to proceed in the manner above designated; and in the end the accused was convicted and sentenced to seven days imprisonment with hard labour in the Savanna-la-Mar lockup. An appeal to the Supreme Court failed, and he duly served his sentence of imprisonment.

Now, by reason of this conviction, the hero of this story became automatically disqualified for holding his seat as an elected member of the Parochial Board. An intimation to that effect was accordingly conveyed to him at the next ensuing meeting of the Board after his release; so he duly made his exit from that body. But within a very short time after, the election for a representative of the parish in the Legislative Council was held, at which he came forward as a candidate, and triumphed over his one opponent—a white man of low calibre, since deceased—by an overwhelming majority. Having been duly sworn in as a member of the island's Legislative Assembly, he walked into the next meeting of the Parochial Board, saying, in effect:—"Here I am again gentlemen, arrived to take my seat as an *ex-officio* member of your body."

Whereupon the Parochial Board promptly elected him chairman! By virtue of his office he became also one of the Trustees of Manning's Free School, in whose hands lies the education of the better class youth of the parish of Westmoreland.

It is thus demonstrated that, according to the profound wisdom of the Law, while a sentence of imprisonment with hard labour inflicted by a crimin-

al court disqualifies a man for an elected seat at the Parochial Board of his parish, it does not incapacitate him from becoming a member of the Supreme Council of the Legislature of the whole island; and that his place in the latter entitles him to resume in the former the position from which he has just been automatically ejected by such sentence. If that does not represent the very last word in absurd anomalies, then I should like to know where that is to be found.

Marvellous to relate, this whole episode formed too nauseous a mouthful even for Sir Sydney Olivier's digestion; and he actually demonstrated his distaste for it by discontinuing the custom which had been introduced some years previously—I forget by which Governor—of giving a dinner at King's House to the members of the Legislative Council on the first day of each session: (one session per annum used to suffice in those days). It was dropped that year, and remained in abeyance for upwards of ten years. It has been only quite recently resuscitated.

There is a very striking difference between the negroes inhabiting the mountain regions of Westmoreland and those dwelling in the sugar cane districts of the lowlands. I have already elsewhere in this book commented on the degraded aspect of the type that prevails in neighbourhoods where sugar is king; and this is, I think, nowhere more strongly marked than in Westmoreland. A stranger desirous of studying this anthropological phenomenon may easily do so by attending any open air function—especially an agricultural show—in the Newmarket, Darliston, and Betheltown districts and afterwards being present at a similar gathering in the vicinity of

Grange Hill, at which the denizens of such places as Belleisle, Fullersfield, Buckfoot Bush, and other homes of sugar estate labour are assembled. In the former he will see none but clean-skinned, well-dressed, decent, civil and quietly cheerful people, moving about in an orderly and decorous manner which it is a pleasure to witness, and would do credit to any peasantry in the world. In the latter he will be surrounded by a mob of Troglodytes, uncouth and boisterous, and hear indecent language and profanity yelled out all around him; while as the day declines to its close and the rum begins to assert itself it will be wise for him to take his departure from the scene—especially if his skin should chance to be conspicuously fair. The illicit traffic in rum which is carried on in this district—not always without the connivance of persons in authority on the various estates—is a very flourishing industry; and, as might be expected, Obeah is also rampant.

During 1921, the first year of my second sojourn in Westmoreland, nothing very notable occurred in the direction of crime. Besides the two towns of Savanna-la-Mar and Lucea, twenty-two miles apart, I had charge of ten out-stations altogether, six in Westmoreland and four in Hanover. The latter, the smallest parish in the island, is singularly free from crime of a serious nature; although inhabited chiefly by a small settler population of particularly rough and uncouth manners despite the material prosperity enjoyed by most of them by reason of their yams, which are celebrated throughout the island. I have known no fewer than four consecutive Circuit Courts pass without a single case listed for trial at any one of them, covering a period of a year

and four months. The scenery of the parish is exquisitely beautiful. From the hills surrounding Lucea and Green Island views can be obtained along the winding roads such as are not to be surpassed in the island, as one drives along under the shade of the mango trees abounding everywhere. Clumps of forest alternate with cultivated land among the crumpled hills; the bright green of guinea grass, and the darker tint of banana fields relieve the sombre gloss of the yam-vines, twined on sticks in serried ranks and looking exactly like a hop plantation in the mother country or a vineyard on the Rhine, with white houses dotted about here and there; while away to the horizon sparkle and flash the foam-crested waves of the azure Caribbean. From certain points in these hills the town of Lucea can be seen nestling on the shores of its delightful little land-locked harbour away down below; and always giving the impression of being viewed through the wrong end of a telescope. The drive along the coast between Montego Bay and Lucea and right on to within four miles of Green Island is a sheer delight; with the blue sea on one hand breaking over honeycomb rocks or splashing on the palm-shaded beaches of fairy-like coves, nearly every one of which has a stream flowing into it.

My work naturally entailed a great deal of travelling, but the roads, although very hilly, were good; while the quarters at Lucea, with the sea on three sides, afforded a very pleasant change from the heat and the malarious atmosphere of Savanna-la-Mar. For me the most important event of that year 1921, was the order telegraphed to me by the Inspector General during the week before Christmas to



Photo by Young, Falmouth

Mr. Wiseman. Hon. R. Nosworthy. Hon. E. L. Wood. Inspector Thomas.
 Hon. Mr. Ormsby-Gore. Mr. A. L. Delgado. Hon. G. S. Ewen. Inspector Beresford.
 COLONIAL OFFICE DELEGATION AT FALMOUTH, DECEMBER 1921.

proceed to Mandeville and there join the party of Colonial Office delegates for the purpose of accompanying them on their tour through the western parishes. The members of the party were the Hon. E. F. L. Wood, M.P., (now Lord Irwin, Viceroy of India), the Hon. W. G. A. Ormsby-Gore, M.P., and Mr. R. A. Wiseman of the Colonial Office. Accompanying them was also the Hon. R. Nosworthy, then Acting Colonial Secretary. We visited Black River, Savanna-la-Mar, Montego Bay, Falmouth and St. Ann's Bay, winding up at Moneague hotel on the Sunday before Christmas. My journey of four days in the company of these gentlemen was an unmixed pleasure; and I have already related how through the kindly interest taken by them in me, particularly by Mr. Ormsby-Gore, I at long last received the award of the King's Police Medal, upwards of twenty-one years after I had honestly earned it.

On Sunday the 12th February 1922, there occurred the most dire tragedy of my whole career in the police force; but before describing it I must offer some preliminary remarks. My readers should know that, owing to the possession of a peculiar knack of handling men, I had earned at the headquarter office the *soubriquet* of "Kill-or-Cure;" which means to say that when the conduct of some member of the Kingston division of police became such as to render his retention there undesirable, although showing some capacity for better things, he was usually sent to me—sometimes after having been reduced in rank—I having the reputation of being able to reform him, if there was any good in him at all; and, if not, of giving him a very short shrift indeed. Men of this type were frequently sent to me in Westmoreland

and Hanover, among them an unduly large proportion of ex-members of the Jamaica War Contingent; who, if they had not served in the police previous to the war, had received the worst training possible for a policeman's life. Of these it may be said that, like the little girl in the nursery rhyme, "who had a little curl right in the middle of her forehead," when they were good they were "very, very good," but when they were bad they were "horrid." Among those thus sent to me were, as subsequent events disclosed, one homicidal maniac, and one what the Americans call a "fire-bug" (And not only did I frequently receive men of this description, but the worst dullards among the recruits at the depot seemed to be specially selected for service in my divisions.) The former of these men, named Barrett, was my bugler. He was a "light-skinned" black man of sturdy build, and his face gave the indications of a bad temper; but he was always clean and smart in appearance; and had the gift of putting more pathos and artistic expression into the calls than any other man that I have ever heard blow them. I rather liked him. There had been some friction between himself and my sergeant-major, Hamilton, as also with a corporal named Samuels, just about this time, in consequence of which I had put him in orders for transfer to an out-station as from Monday the 13th February. On this fateful Sunday, after a very strenuous week in Westmoreland, I drove over to Lucea at the hottest time of an unusually hot day; and was enjoying some much-needed sleep in the late afternoon when I was rudely awakened by receipt of a telegram from my sergeant-major informing me that Barrett had armed himself with his carbine and

bayonet, and run amok, shooting Corporal Samuels, and firing indiscriminately at persons outside the station wall; also that he had set fire to the station, which was then burning, and was preventing any person from approaching it by the threat of the loaded carbine. I immediately dispatched a man to procure a motor car to take me back to Savanna-la-Mar, telegraphing the sergeant-major at the same time to procure a gun somewhere and shoot Barrett; but all was over long before that telegram reached its destination. Delayed by trouble with the motor car—as usually happens at such a crisis—it was 8 o'clock before I arrived at the Savanna-la-Mar station. There I found the ruins still smouldering; the upper storey built of wood, completely destroyed, while the stone walls of the lower were still standing. There was a considerable crowd of people gathered about the open spaces outside the station—it was a brilliant moonlight night—and they greeted me with every sign of respectful sympathy. I then began to gather from the sergeant-major the details of the disaster, which were as follows:—The day being Sunday, nearly all the men who were not required for duty were on leave, scattered about the town and one or two of them gone out to the country; while the few remaining in barracks were all in a more or less somnolent condition. Barrett appeared to be packing up his things in preparation for his transfer to the out-station, on the following morning; but what he was really doing was making ready for the destruction of the station. One stupid lout of a recruit, lately from the depot, who was lying on his bed in the barrack-room close to Barrett, actually saw the latter doing things which in any person of average intelligence

must have aroused suspicion of some evil intent; but this dullard simply looked on and said nothing to anyone. Corporal Samuels, who was in charge of the town guard for the day, was lying down on his bed in the sub-officers' room, with the door shut, taking a rest, preparatory to posting the relief at 6 p.m. Barrett took down his carbine, bayonet and bandolier from the rack, and inserted in the loops of the latter ten rounds of ball cartridge, which it afterwards transpired he had brought with him from the war and kept concealed at the bottom of his regulation box. Among his other preparations he had placed piles of waste paper—old Police Gazettes and returns obtained from my office adjoining the barrack-room—in various places and saturated them with kerosene oil. He then fixed his bayonet, loaded his carbine, went to the door of the room in which Corporal Samuels was lying and fired three shots through it, without opening it. The corporal's bed was quite close by. On this, the imbecile who had witnessed all these preliminaries fled for his life, jumping over the back verandah some fifteen feet down into the yard, and over the wall into safety. The noise of the firing awoke the two or three other men who were slumbering in the room; and on seeing Barrett setting fire to the material which he had prepared, and realising his attitude generally, with that slowness of comprehension which is such a marked characteristic of their race, they also fled for dear life down the broad stone steps in the front of the building. Truth here compels me to confess—and I may as well do so at once, with keen regret—that the manner in which the whole of this frightful emergency was dealt with did not reflect credit on

anybody concerned, with one solitary exception. Corporal Samuels, sorely wounded as he was by the bullets, which had shattered his right leg, managed to open a window in his room, descend to the ground by a rain-water pipe, and crawl across the back yard and over the wall into some sugar-canes that were growing on the edge of the swamp. He was afterwards found there, and removed to the hospital; where he died on Wednesday the 15th, after the District Medical Officer had made an ineffectual attempt to save his life by amputating the shattered leg just below the hip.

Barrett had set his fire at the back part of the building, so as to hinder, no doubt, any person from entering the station on that side, and also to prevent access to the fire engines and all the other appliances of the fire brigade, which I had allowed to be kept under the back verandah. He then took up his station on a chair at the top of the front steps with his carbine and fixed bayonet in his hands, and the bandolier over his shoulder containing the seven remaining rounds of ammunition, threatening death to anyone that approached the premises. Whenever he thought he saw a constable, either in uniform or plain clothes, anywhere near the station, he fired a shot, but fortunately he did not succeed in hitting anyone, although there were some narrow escapes. One man had a bullet through his sleeve, just above the wrist. All this time there were half-a-dozen prisoners in the cells downstairs who were in imminent danger of being roasted alive, and their voices were heard uttering yells of terror; so Barrett allowed a well-known habitual criminal named Monteith to enter the station, carrying an axe, with which he bat-

tered in the doors of the cells and thus released the unfortunate creatures. They were too scared to run away, and they were ultimately secured by constables lurking in the vicinity. Having used up all his ammunition in this indiscriminate firing, with the exception of one round, and driven by the heat of the fire, Barrett now descended from his perch at the top of the steps into the yard, remarking:—"I have one round left, and that is for Hamilton"—meaning the sergeant-major. On hearing this, a corporal named Johnson, who was in hiding behind the rear wall of the station, on leave in plain clothes, jumped over the wall, ran up and seized Barrett from behind. With the help of a couple of other constables and some civilians he was overpowered, disarmed, and handcuffed. Fortunately the men on street duty had their handcuffs with them, as all the others had been destroyed by the fire. By the time I arrived in Savanna-la-Mar he had been removed to the lock-up at Whithorn station 8 miles away, where I visited him at about 10 p.m. He talked to me in a silly, incoherent manner, but he was quite respectful. The charge against him at this stage was shooting Corporal Samuels, with intent to kill; but after the latter had died at about 10 p.m. on the 15th, I went again to Whithorn the same night and re-arrested him on the charge of murder. The Inspector General had arrived on the scene during Wednesday, and on Thursday morning we buried poor Samuels, with the I. G. and the Custos attending the funeral. A tombstone has since been erected to his memory in the Savanna-la-Mar cemetery by means of subscriptions from his comrades and myself. I have never before or since heard of a case of

one constable murdering another; so in this instance also has my experience been as unique as it is tragic.

The conditions resulting from this catastrophe which I now had to face were as follows:—Several of the men, especially the single ones, who had been on leave in plain clothes on the Sunday had lost everything they possessed, except what they stood up in. The married men were better off, as most of their effects were kept at the homes of their respective wives, as far as uniform and other clothing went. But every article of equipment had been destroyed by the fire, with exception of Barrett's carbine, bayonet, bandolier and belt. About three thousand rounds of ball cartridge had exploded. Every one of the men's iron bed-cots, all the bedding, all the men's boxes with their contents, all books and records of every description, the government standard weights and measures, the appliances of the fire brigade: in short, every single thing contained within the walls of the building had been, if not utterly and completely destroyed, rendered unfit for further use. My own sword and belt which I had had for forty-five years shared the common fate, as they were hanging in my office. Luckily I had always kept the service revolver in my house. The men who had been out on street duty at the time of the fire, saved the uniform on their backs, with their handcuffs, belts and batons. For the remainder of the night the prisoners who had been rescued from the cells were shut up in one of the small rooms of the courthouse under a guard of men who had to lie on benches until the following morning, when the prisoners were despatched to the Little London station. When we had my iron chest forced open by a blacksmith—it had of

course fallen through on to the ground floor—we found the banknotes crumbling to ashes at the touch, and all the silver and nickel coins melted into a shapeless lump of metal. Fortunately the sum of money was not a large one, but there was some difficulty in fixing it, owing to the destruction of the cashbook. Tuesday, the next day but one after this calamity, was the date of the weekly criminal court, and we were faced with two immediate and pressing difficulties: one that all documents in connection with the cases for trial which had been in our keeping, as well as all stolen property to be produced had ceased to exist; and the other that only some two or three of the men who would have to attend the court had any uniform or accoutrements to wear. However, it so happened that the annual supply of new clothing and equipment was just then in process of being issued from the stores in Kingston, and the Hanover Division had received its quota during the previous week; while the Westmoreland issue had fortunately not yet arrived, otherwise it would all have perished, as everything else did. So on Monday morning I hired two motor cars, and taking my office clerk, Corporal Sanford, with me, I went over to Lucea, commandeered from that division all that was immediately necessary in the line of clothing, equipment, books and stationery, as well as some carbines, bayonets, and a few hundred rounds of ball cartridge, and returned to Savanna-la-Mar early in the evening with the two cars laden with the fruits of my expedition. As the result I was able to meet the Resident Magistrate at his court on Tuesday morning with the requisite number of men, all properly dressed and accoutred, just as if nothing had happened. The In-

spector General, Mr. W. E. Clark, arrived on Wednesday, as stated above, and when I reported to him what I had done to meet the emergency he actually asked me why I had not sent a requisition to him first! I did not reply to the question, but simply looked him between the eyes, hard, more in sorrow than in anger, for three seconds or more. He did not pursue the subject any further, but began to talk of other matters; and it was never mentioned again. I should here pay a high tribute to the loyalty of Corporal Sanford, mentioned above, and the remarkably capable and efficient service which he rendered, both on this occasion and after another subsequent disaster by fire, which will be described in due course. I hope to see the sergeant-major's crown on his sleeve before I die.

During the three or four days following the fire we were allowed to use a couple of rooms in the courthouse as a temporary barracks and office; but on the arrival of the Inspector General an arrangement was made to rent a disused shop situated in the lower part of the town.

The case against Barrett could not be got ready in time for the February Circuit Court, so it was fixed for the ensuing one in June. While the man was in confinement in the Spanish Town District Prison he was kept under observation, and visited and interviewed by Dr. Huntley Peck, the prison surgeon, and Dr. D. J. Williams, at that time the head of the Lunatic Asylum. They both came to the conclusion that Barrett was the victim of a rare form of mental disease known as *dementia praecox*, and incapable of understanding the proceedings at his trial. Therefore, when he was arraigned, a jury was empanelled

to try the question of his sanity; and their verdict being in accordance with the evidence of the two medical men above mentioned, the court directed that he should be detained in custody during the pleasure of His Excellency the Governor. He was accordingly removed to the Asylum, and has been there ever since.

The building to which we were now relegated was a small one of two storeys, built of concrete, with a zinc roof, and fronting directly on Great George Street, without even the shelter of a piazza. At the back was a jungle of weeds, ornamented with empty tins, barrels, and other derelict utensils of various kinds, and fading away into the mud at the edge of the mangrove swamp. There were, of course, no lock-ups, or sanitary conveniences, or any other conveniences. The dimensions of this building were about forty feet by forty; and as the demands of my office filled up the entire upper story, about sixteen hundred square feet was all the space available for housing twenty-five men (assuming the detachment to be always at full strength), and ministering to the needs of the public having business at the station. There were no jalousie windows for ventilation, but only hinged glass ones, nor was there any verandah; so that these windows, as well as the doors, had to be left open day and night, when it was fine, in order to admit air, thus depriving the men of all privacy, and closed whenever it rained, thus rendering the atmosphere quite insupportable. Bedding was provided by degrees by means of canvas stretchers made in the Penitentiary, on which as many of the men as the room would hold had to lie at night packed like sardines in a tin. It was impossible to accommodate more than three or four men besides those on town

guard duty; and, as a natural result, the others walked in and out at night just as they pleased to and from houses in the town. The sick list, which had been bad enough at the old station, as already stated, mounted up by leaps and bounds, until it was nothing unusual for forty per cent. of the men to be unfit for duty. The effect on the discipline of the detachment produced by these conditions I may safely leave intelligent readers to imagine for themselves. The District Medical Officer repeatedly made strong representations of the insanitary conditions, which I duly forwarded to the Inspector General; and I have every reason to believe that they reached that able, upright administrator, and wise, far-seeing statesman, Sir Leslie Probyn, who was Governor at the time; but nothing whatever was done. The police of Savanna-la-Mar were compelled to live and work under the conditions I have depicted from February 1922 until November 1923, when this place in its turn was consumed by fire, and we were driven into another ex-shop; which, although more commodious, was in other respects even less desirable than the one just described. The owner did not neglect his opportunity of extorting an exorbitant rent from the government. I ought here to say, in respect of my reference to the effect of these conditions on the discipline of the men, that the Inspector General himself told me, in the course of the events which will next be described, that he had said to the Honourable Hugh Clarke, Custos of the parish, that the conditions were such as "would undermine the discipline of the finest regiment in the British Army;" whereupon that sapient and august potentate had replied that he failed to see why that should have

had any effect on the discipline. I will not insult the intelligence of my readers by commenting on this sage pronouncement. In my humble opinion the only term by which the treatment of the government towards myself and my men at this period may adequately be described is that of "outrage." The conditions detailed above were those in which we found ourselves when the era of fires began, which will presently come under discussion.

During the year 1923 the most remarkable event in the criminal record of the parish was the murder in the Betheltown district, of a married woman by her husband; who had, strange to say, induced two other men to assist him in accomplishing the deed. They lured the woman into the house of one of them by night, overpowered her, and then drowned her in a deep pond near by. I do not at this moment recollect a more brutal crime in all my long experience. The case was very intelligently handled by Sergeant Sutherland of Betheltown station, aided by the procuring of most important evidence from a prisoner in the lockup at Whithorn station by Sergeant Campbell; and a warm tribute was paid by the judge at the trial to the conduct of these two men. There were no eye-witnesses; but the circumstantial evidence was of so convincing a nature that the jury found all the three guilty within sixty seconds after completion of the judge's summing up; with a recommendation to mercy on behalf of the youngest, who was little more than a boy. The other two were in due course executed. That case was the last of its kind with which I had to do in my career.

When the news was promulgated of my having been awarded the King's Police Medal in 1923, it

A WEST INDIAN POLICEMAN.



Photo by Young, Falmouth

THE AUTHOR, AGED 67.

proved a source of great gratification to the Citizens' Association, which I have mentioned above. They wrote me a letter of warm congratulation, and passed a resolution asking Sir Leslie Probyn to come down to Savanna-la-Mar for the purpose of there publicly presenting me with this decoration. His Excellency, on receipt of the letter conveying this resolution, replied regretting his inability to undertake the journey at that juncture, and stating that he had asked the Custos to act as his deputy in the matter. Mr. Clarke personally expressed to me his willingness to undertake the presentation; but said at the same time that he thought it should more fittingly and becomingly take place in Kingston, as my long service was the property of the whole island, and not of the parish of Westmoreland alone. In this I entirely agreed with him. (The reader is requested to bear this in mind, in view of what is coming later.)

In the end the Inspector General arranged a special parade at the depot on the 23rd August, for the presentation of the King's Police Medal to me, and also a number of war medals to various other members of the force who had served in the British West Indies Regiment; and Sir Leslie Probyn pinned the decoration on my breast in the presence of some two hundred police, and of a few officials, and old friends and contemporaries of mine whose names I had sent in to the I.G. with the request that they should be invited. There were also a good many old police pensioners present, who had served under me in various parishes.

On returning to Savanna-la-Mar I received a second congratulatory letter from the Citizens' Associa-

tion, in reply to which I sent them a photograph of myself just as I had appeared on the parade—a copy of the one forming the frontispiece of this book. In return they wrote to thank me, and to assure me that this picture would be preserved among their archives as a cherished possession. This was at the beginning of September; but when about two months later the Custos and his brother-in-law entered upon their campaign of hounding me out of Westmoreland, not one note of disapproval was uttered by this Association—not even, as I had expected, by a certain prominent clerical member of it, a man with whom I had been on terms of close intimacy for over ten years; long before he migrated to Savanna-la-Mar. Such is the domination exercised by the Honourable Hugh Clarke over the free and independent denizens of that centre of civilization. I have in a previous page quoted his reply to the Inspector General in respect of the detrimental effect on the discipline of my men wrought by the conditions to which they had been subjected since the burning down of the station; but I think it should be also stated that in the face of these conditions the process of sending to me derelects from Kingston and dullards from the depot was still continued by Mr. W. E. Clark. The result was that during 1923 I was surrounded by a greater proportion of knaves and fools wearing the uniform of the Jamaica Constabulary than at any previous period of my life. Indeed, as subsequent developments revealed, three or four of them were more than just knaves: they were scoundrels of a dangerous type. Such was my plight when the era of the incendiary fires began, in November of that year. Before placing on the stage the “last scene of all that ends this strange,

eventful history," I think it meet and proper to raise the curtain by describing the two figures which dominate it; namely the Honourable Hugh Clarke, Custos of Westmoreland, and Mr. W. E. Clark, then Inspector General of Police. The first-named had long been the autocrat and uncrowned king of Westmoreland in general and of Savanna-la-Mar in particular, before Sir Leslie Probyn gave him the final *cachet* by appointing him Custos in 1920. (I was present at his swearing-in and signed the Roll as one of the magistrates of the parish.) He is the president of a Building Society, founded by his father, which holds the majority of the population in its grip; and the offices of this society are situated on the ground floor of his palatial residence at Hendon. There sits his trusty secretary, as a kind of watchdog, gathering information each day about everything that happens in the town, and nearly everything that happens in the parish; all of which trickles through to his august master. (I purposely refrain from using the word "filters," as that implies a certain process of purification.) The domination which these two people have thus established over the residents of Savanna-la-Mar is abundantly demonstrated by the fact that during the epoch which I am about to describe several anonymous letters bearing upon the subject of the fires, and addressed to persons in the town by post, or found in the street, were taken by the recipients and the finders, not at once to me, as they should have been, but to the watchdog, or to "Mass' Hugh" himself. (This is the term of endearment by which the latter is generally known.)

One of them indeed was passed on to the local correspondent of the *Gleaner* and sent up by him

for publication, before I ever saw it. Here it is, just as it appeared in print:—

“Mrs.———

“This is to warn you of one coming within a few days’ time, not Chiney this time, Syrians and others.

“Show this to Inspector ——— of Police to let him put on as much guard as he likes, he is 46 years old in the service we will show him he and his men is no use; we can’t help it, must be done for a change.”

The letter, not signed, but bore the appearance of well formed handwriting disguised.”

I had no cause whatever to complain of Mr. Clarke’s conduct towards me, either during my first sojourn in Westmoreland, from 1909 to 1913, when he was not the Custos, or during my second—when he was—from January 1921 up to the end of November 1923. He appeared always very friendly and hospitable; entertaining me in his house, and at public functions eulogising me and my boys, and making most sympathetic references to their untimely deaths. For instance, at the unveiling of the War Memorial Tablet erected in Manning’s School, I was, by his request, the principal speaker. But in December he suddenly and completely changed his attitude to one of rabid animosity towards me; and never rested until he had bullied and frightened the weak Inspector General into driving me out of Westmoreland. I will leave it to my readers to decide, after hearing the whole story, whether in doing this he came out into the open like a man, or stabbed me in the back.

The motives which actuated him still remain a mystery to me. I had never done or attempted to do,

harm to him or anyone connected with him. The circumstances in which I lived were exactly as they had been ever since my first arrival in the parish over fourteen years previously; and I had never done anything more than attend to my job, pay my way, and mind my own business. So much for His Honour the Custos—by way of introduction. (It seems superfluous to add that he is a very devout and orthodox professor of Christianity.)

With respect to Mr. W. E. Clark, the Inspector General, I have already given some information in sundry previous chapters. I have related how after being promoted to the rank of Deputy Inspector General over my head, although twelve years my junior, he was elevated to that of Inspector General of Police, first of Barbados, next of British Guiana, and finally of Jamaica, his native land—all through some mysterious influence, the secret of which no man has yet been able to fathom. I will now adduce, out of his own mouth, evidence of the value which he set on my services. In the annual report on the working of his department for the year 1920-21, published in the Gazette, he wrote of me in these terms:—"It would seem also but right that I should acknowledge the public-spiritedness and remarkable vigour of Inspector Thomas. His long experience and ability are well known; whilst by devotion to duty in accepting responsibility for two parishes for months at a time he has been an immeasurable help under the existing shortage of officers."

In reply to a question addressed to him by the Government in 1921, not long after I had attained the age of 65, as to whether there was any special reason for my not being called upon to retire from

the service, he wrote as follows:—"I beg to report that although he has attained the age of 65 years he still continues to perform his duties with the vigour and ability characteristic of his service. He is at present in charge of the parishes of Westmoreland and Hanover, due to the shortage of officers, and his loss to the Department at the present time would be most serious and inconvenient."

Again in 1923 he recommended my retention in the service for a year longer, although I was then within less than three months of my 67th birthday; and this extension was granted by His Excellency the Governor. These introductions being finished, we will now proceed with the fires.

There were two destructive fires in the town of Savanna-la-Mar, both undoubtedly of incendiary origin, in November, 1923. In that respect Savanna-la-Mar was no worse off than any other town of the island; for during the period extending from October 1922 to the 26th May 1925 there raged a regular epidemic of such fires all over the country, 1923 being the worst year. The total number of them was one hundred and seventy-five; and the cost to the insurance companies was £389,493. There were also twenty-six abortive attempts. My figures are unassailable, for they have been supplied to me by my friend Herbert Burke, the well known secretary of the Jamaica Co-operative Insurance Company. I have already described the conditions of Savanna-la-Mar as "affording unparalleled facilities for the concealment of criminals and obliteration of the traces of crime;" so after the first fire I drafted in a strong force of district constables from all over the parish, and these did special patrol night after night, supervised by sub-officers detached from other

duties as well as by Sergeant-Major Hamilton and myself. I suggested to the Custos my patrolling the town with a shot-gun, as I used to do just after the hurricane, but he asked me not to do that as he did not wish the fire-bugs to be frightened but to be caught. His attitude was at that time apparently still quite friendly and sympathetic.

The second fire took place about the middle of November; and that was in my opinion directly due to the defection of two of the scoundrels in the regular police whom I have alluded to above. That destroyed the building which we had been occupying ever since the burning down of the station in February, 1922, and drove us into another place; in which there was certainly more space, but still less possibility of privacy for anyone—not even for myself when doing my office work. On this occasion however we were able to save all the government property. The vigilance of my patrols resulted in four attempts at arson being nipped in the bud, and rendered abortive. I think it will be admitted that four in one month out of twenty-six in two years and a half for the whole island is not a bad percentage for one parish. Besides these, I had two men committed for trial at the Circuit Court of February, 1924 on charges of arson. The first one was arrested on a Friday night while I was away at Lucea; and on coming over about 9 a.m. the following day I found the Custos at the temporary station congratulating the sergeant-major and the men on their capture. This man was acquitted at the Circuit Court through the most shameless perjury on the part of a woman which I ever witnessed. The other, who was one of my own men, was convicted and sentenced to ten years penal servitude. He

was the ex-soldier whom I have described as a "fire-bug;" and his conviction was the only one obtained in the whole island out of the 175 incendiary fires reported. So that, worthless and incompetent as we were pronounced to be by the Custos, his brother-in-law, and a fawning and servile Parochial Board, our success in respect of prevention and detection of the crime of arson was a performance unrivalled by the police of any other parish in the island.

At the December meeting of the Parochial Board a resolution was proposed by Mr. S. E. Morris, brother-in-law of the Custos, who has already figured largely in these pages, seconded by the Custos himself, and carried unanimously, calling upon the Governor "to approve of an exchange of the entire staff of the Police officers and men stationed in Savanna-la-Mar," on account of their inability to cope with the menace of the fires. Mr. Morris, in the exuberance of his venom, was all for telegraphing the resolution to the Colonial Secretary there and then; but his august brother-in-law seemed to relent towards us so far as to rule that a letter would serve the purpose as well. These details I ascertained by enquiry, after seeing the report sent to the *Gleaner* by the local correspondent; but that was not the first intimation of the resolution which I had received. Oh dear, no! This I had from His Honour the Custos himself; and here he gave me a convincing demonstration of his ingenuous and straightforward nature in this wise:—On the very day of this meeting of the Board, between four and five o'clock in the afternoon, while driving home from my office in my motor car, (I owned one for the last twelve months of my service,) in passing the courthouse, I saw Mr. Clarke standing at the gate, and

pulled up to speak to him. He said that he was waiting for his own car, but as it had not arrived would I give him a lift home, as I should be passing his door? He got in, and while driving up the street he said:—"We have just passed a resolution at the Board asking the Governor to remove all the police stationed in Savanna-la-Mar, but that doesn't affect you, of course." Judge then, of my astonishment when I read two days later the wording of the resolution which appeared in the *Gleaner*, as quoted above! Now, as I have shown by the statistics already given, the resolution itself was based on entirely false premises; and even if that had not been the case the purport of it was inherently silly and impracticable, in that it demanded that all the members of the police of the town, who, however incompetent they might be, at any rate knew the place and the people, should be removed, and their places, of course, filled by a number of total strangers. This affords another instance of the weird nature of the local psychology. The resolution was beyond all doubt conceived in such malice that its absurdity was obscured.

On the evening of Sunday the 16th December, shortly before 8 o'clock, I was startled by the arrival at my quarters of Inspector O'Hanlon from Kingston, accompanied by Sergeant (now Sergeant-Major) Gayle of the Detective Office. The former bore a letter from the Inspector-General saying that he had been sent to "assist" me. I had not applied for any assistance; but I divined at once that Mr. W. E. Clark had been badly scared by reading of the action taken by the Parochial Board—and no doubt by other means behind my back, as well; who can tell? However I was glad to see O'Hanlon, and also Gayle—who had begun his ser-

vice in the force under me in Montego Bay twenty years before. After giving them some light refreshment, I took O'Hanlon over to Hendon to report to the Custos; and I there underwent at the hands of that gentleman the deepest humiliation that I have ever been compelled to endure. The most charitable explanation to be given of his conduct is that he was so completely unnerved by the fire menace, and excited by detestation of me, as to be thrown entirely off his mental balance. He received O'Hanlon and myself in the entrance hall of his house, and offered us seats. No sooner had O'Hanlon told him that he had just driven in his car that day all the way from Kingston and brought Detective Sergeant Gayle with him, than the Custos asked:—"Is he reliable?" Just think of it! The Detective Inspector from Kingston travels all the 130 miles to Savanna-la-Mar by road, bringing with him a sergeant whom he naturally regards as the most competent and trustworthy member of his staff, to be met with an enquiry as to whether this sergeant was "reliable"! I think that alone indicates what a state of mind the gentleman had arrived at. I cannot, for want of space, enter into all the details. I can only say that for one hour by the clock this high functionary, chief magistrate and social leader of the parish, took advantage of his position and of the fact that he was in his own private house, to sit down, and, in the presence of his own boy, to denounce me and all my doings, and endeavour to demonstrate my incompetence, to a youthful fellow officer of the force, thirty-seven years my junior in the service, and younger than my own two eldest boys would have been had they then been still alive. He actually so far forgot himself as to insinuate that infor-

mation was being conveyed to and from a man named King, then in the lockup charged with arson, through me, on account of King's mother being my cook; thereby betraying his own ignorance of the fact that King's solicitor had access to his client in the lockup whenever he chose; and that no member of the police was allowed within earshot while they were in consultation. Of course the rumours which he had heard about the probable witnesses for King's defence, etc., had reached him through his watchdog as above described. This is the way in which this "gentleman" who was scarcely born when I joined the Constabulary Force, and who had done nothing in his life except amass the wealth that placed him in the position thus to lord it over me, behaved towards me in his house. Towards me: with a record of forty-seven years of such service to the public as I have described in these pages; me: with four gallant sons sacrificed in the prime of their young manhood for England; me: a grandfather five times over! I forgot to say that once in his excitement he went so far as to stamp his foot at me. And when I had had enough of it, and got up to go, at about 9.30 he actually proposed to shake hands with me! He so entirely forgot the rudimentary obligations of hospitality that, although he was told that O'Hanlon had driven himself in a little two-seater car all the way from Kingston over strange roads, and a couple of hours in the darkness of night, he never even offered him a glass of water!

Leaving Hendon, I took O'Hanlon to the Renville hotel, where he was accommodated during his three weeks' stay in Savanna-la-Mar. He confessed to me that the situation appeared to him impossible,

after this ebullition on the part of the Custos; and asked me to telegraph to the Inspector General a request that he should come to Savanna-la-Mar with all possible haste. This I did on the following morning. O'Hanlon and I then arranged to do night duty on alternate nights. At midnight on Tuesday the 18th, being off for the night, I was roused from sleep by the report that constable Percival James, the "fire-bug" already mentioned, had been taken red-handed in the act of attempting to set fire to the buildings of Kirkham and Co., not 75 yards from the place we were then occupying as a station. This place, the second into which we had been driven by fire, was so situated and constructed that there was nothing to prevent any man from walking into or out of it at his own sweet will, by day or by night. And, like the other one, it was supposed to serve as a police barrack! If this constable had succeeded in his fell attempt, a clean sweep would have been made of the lower part of the town, right down to the beach, compared to which the other fires would have been mere child's play. I have now long been convinced that this man was the author of all the fires which had previously been set, as well as the writer of the anonymous letter printed above. He was a small man, a good deal below the standard height of the force; but had been taken on simply in consideration of having borne a good character in the B.W.I.R. Not being big enough for Kingston, he had been sent to me.

On the following day, Wednesday, the Inspector General turned up; but before his arrival there occurred another incident which throws into still higher relief the eminent fitness of the Hon. Hugh Clarke for the exalted position which he holds.

I give it in the form of a cutting from the *Gleaner* just as it was reported by the local correspondent:—

“Inspector General in Sav-la-Mar,

Sav-la-Mar, Dec. 19.—(2.25 p.m.)—Inspector General Clark, head of the Police Force of the island, has arrived here.

There was a small demonstration this morning which was quickly suppressed. It had its origin in a section of the community which was expressing its pleasure at the arrest of the policeman, and which paraded the streets with drums. The principal demonstrator was arrested but promptly bailed.

There is a great feeling of relief on all sides and much sympathy is expressed for Inspector Thomas who has always been a most zealous police officer.”

The report is absolutely correct as far as it goes, but it requires more detail. Of course the news of the arrest of James spread like wild-fire as soon as daylight came, although we had managed to keep it secret during the night; and at an early hour of the morning the habitual criminal Monteith—the same one who had rescued the prisoners from Barrett’s holocaust in February 1922—got hold of three street urchins, with drums and fifes and set them marching about the streets, beating the drums—himself having one—and playing the fifes, in order to express their delight. This constituted a breach of one section of the Towns and Communities Act. Being warned by my sergeant-major to desist, they repaired to the residence of His Honour the Custos, and presently returned to tell the sergeant-major that the Custos had given them permission to play, as it was Christmas week. Upon

their commencing the performance afresh, the sergeant-major arrested the lot, and locked them up, pending my arrival at the station. At about nine o'clock, while O'Hanlon and I were inspecting the spot at which James had attempted to light the fire on the previous night, a constable came to me with a message saying that the Custos desired to see me at the station. Accompanied by O'Hanlon I immediately went there, and to my astonishment found His Honour apparently at the head of a hostile demonstration. He was standing at the station door, in riding gear, pale with rage; while gathered in the street outside, and watching him with great interest, was a crowd of the rabble of the town, consisting chiefly of ragged boys and girls. O'Hanlon and I both saluted him most punctiliously in proper military style, and said "good morning, sir," as well, but he took not the slightest notice of that. He at once barked out at me:—"I've come to bail those men that your sergeant-major locked up this morning."

"Certainly, sir," I said, and then ordered the habitual criminal and the three urchins to be brought out. After the necessary formalities had been gone through, the men were released; and they and the Chief Magistrate of the parish left the station together, amid the cheers of the rabble assembled outside. As he was departing I gave him a farewell salute, but he did not deign to notice that either. This explains the words "but promptly bailed" which appear in the newspaper report above inserted.

Now, immediately after this, either Mr. Clarke or his watchdog must have got at the newspaper reporter, and persuaded him to send up the plausible

story which appeared in the *Gleaner* two days later, as follows:—

“AN INCIDENT EXPLAINED.”

“On the morning Wednesday (sic) following the arrest of the policeman Percival James, certain elements of the town got out a drum and started to promenade Great George Street. The police looked upon it as a demonstration of rejoicing at the fact that one of their number had been arrested as an alleged fire bug, and stopped the celebration. The Custos was appealed to on the score that the drum playing and general manifestation of delight were not a demonstration against the police but the annual harbingers of the Christmas season. *So he gave permission to carry on.* Undoubtedly the police were rattled at what had happened the night before, and again they banned the drum playing. But they had now been made aware of the true aspect of the matter, and it is understood that the incident will be closed.” (The italics are mine.)

It would appear from this that the Custos arrogated to himself the power to “give permission to carry on” a breach of the Towns and Communities Act. The following also appeared in the same communication:—

“One fact, however, must be noted here, for it is a fact. The police are leaving no stone unturned to prove to the hilt the charge that they laid against one of their number—Constable Percival James, ex-contingent man—whom they claim was caught red-handed trying to set fire to Kirkham’s building. *The fire record is: two destructive fires and four*

attempts, the latter being all discovered by the police and put out before any damage was done. Two alleged incendiaries have been arrested by the police." (The italics are again mine.)

It will thus be seen that my statements with regard to the effects of the vigilance of the worthless and incompetent police officer and men of Savanna-la-Mar—in spite of all the disadvantages above described—are completely borne out by the independent testimony of the local newspaper correspondent. (He was a man with whom I had never had any intercourse.) But to finish with the Custos and his *protégés* of the amateur drum and fife band: his attitude towards the police is well illustrated by the fact that he threatened Sergeant-Major Hamilton with an action on behalf of these vagabonds for false imprisonment. Further lurid light is thrown on it by the following letter which he addressed to me:

"Hendon, Savanna-la-Mar,
2nd January, 1924.

H. T. Thomas, Esq.,
Inspector of Police,
Savanna-la-Mar,

Sir,

re Monteith, Edwin Williams, et al.

Would you be good enough to let me know when the case against these men will be tried as I desire to produce evidence on their behalf.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant

HUGH CLARKE."

(The original letter is in my possession.)

By the time that this letter reached me I had

learnt that my removal from Westmoreland had been decided upon; so, weary and sick at heart, I made a compromise with the Chief Magistrate; I undertaking to withdraw the prosecution against these men, and he giving me a written guarantee not to issue a civil action against the police on their behalf.

The Inspector General arrived, as already stated, on the 19th December, and he remained until the 22nd. During that time, he in company with O'Hanlon, held, I believe, many conferences with the Custos, at the house of the latter—from which I was, of course, excluded. He appeared to preserve throughout a genial and friendly attitude towards me, but I could see that two things of which he told me had struck deadly fear into his bold heart; one being that the Custos had threatened to "call a public meeting" for the purpose of having me expelled from the parish, and the other that the young gentleman who at that time, represented Westmoreland in the Legislative Council—another alleged "friend" of mine—had lent his countenance to the movement, and joined in the hue-and-cry against me. [At the next election he was ousted from his position by a black man.]

However during his stay Mr. W. E. Clark availed himself of my hospitality by taking lunch in my house on two occasions. On the second day he sat down in my drawing-room after lunch and dictated to O'Hanlon a report addressed to the Colonial Secretary, describing the situation and giving the result of his own personal enquiry into the circumstances. In this letter he not only exonerated me from all blame, but vindicated me in the most thorough manner. He dwelt upon the adverse conditions under

which the police of Savanna-la-Mar had been condemned to live and work ever since the destruction of the station in February 1922; and, if my memory serves me aright, repeated the very words which I have quoted him above as having used to the Custos. At any rate he said that I had done all that was humanly possible under most trying circumstances. In short, I could not have penned a more completely favourable judgment myself. He took the draft in order to have it typed by my office clerk, and when that had been done he carried the letter away with him on his departure from Westmoreland. Whether that document ever reached its destination or not I am, of course, unable to say; but if it did, then the fact requires a good deal of explanation that, in spite of it, he must have recommended to the Governor—for it would not be done otherwise—my being deprived of the command of Westmoreland, and relegated to that of Hanover alone, as from the 15th January 1924. Besides the loss of emolument involved, I was thus condemned to finish my record service in the Jamaica Constabulary Force in the smallest and least important parish of the whole island: a service which had begun at a time when no man then in the force, with exception of the Inspector General himself and, perhaps, fifty others, had yet been born; for the efficiency of which I had been eulogised by this gentleman himself—twelve years my junior in it—in the terms which I have quoted in the earlier part of this chapter; and in which I had been retained, on his own recommendation, until I had exceeded by three years the age of *compulsory* retirement.

I duly handed over the Westmoreland division to the officer sent to relieve me on the 15th January 1924,



**THE HONOURABLE HUGH CLARKE, CUSTOS
OF WESTMORELAND.**

and slunk off to hide my diminished head in Lucea. I realised then exactly what a well-bred dog which has been unjustly whipped must feel like.

(I have taken the liberty of embellishing the pages of this book with a portrait of the Honourable Hugh Clarke, in the hope that it may be useful in assisting intelligent readers, with some knowledge of physiognomy, to an understanding. I regret that I have not been able to procure one of his brother-in-law.) I ought to say here that after the arrest of the incendiary policeman there were no more alarms of fire in Savanna-la-Mar up to the time I left, on the 15th January 1924, which confirms my belief above expressed. I endured my ignominy in Hanover until the end of February, when I obtained three months' leave prior to retiring from the service. I finally did so as from the 1st June, 1924, forty-seven years and five months, all but seven days, from the date of my entering it. The gloom into which I had been plunged was slightly lifted by the warmth of the farewell which was accorded to me at Lucea. My trusty sergeant-major, C. C. Williams, and the other sub-officers and men, presented me with a souvenir, accompanied by an address; and at the last court which I attended, on the last Tuesday in February, valedictory speeches were delivered by the Resident Magistrate, the Clerk of Courts, and the lawyers present; by none in more sincere and cordial terms than by the Montego Bay solicitor whom I have described in Chapter XIII. There were two houses in Westmoreland where I was always sure of a warm and sincere welcome, and the truest hospitality: one of a Ewen, at Clifton, and the other that of a Farquharson, at Retreat. At the latter I spent my very last night in

Westmoreland, travelling thither from Lucea on the 29th February; and on the following morning I finally shook from my feet the dust of that parish, my stay in which had been fraught with nothing but disaster. I had entered it originally in 1909 under a dark cloud, and I left it under one still darker in 1924. My fate, now I come to think of it, was nothing more than the common lot of so many strong men having weaklings in authority over them. Sir Michael O'Dwyer, who was one of these, puts it very graphically in his book, "India As I Knew It," thus:—"Thrown to the Wolves."

Chapter XVII.

THE MAROONS.

The great bulk of Jamaicans neither know nor care anything about the history, and even the geography, of their country: but I do not think there is any subject on which more widespread and profound ignorance prevails among them than the one which forms the heading of this chapter. This ignorance is reflected, in a greater degree, in descriptions of the island given by casual writers. The favourite term used is that the Maroons are "a race which has never been conquered;" and this implies that they are of different and distinct blood from the rest of the inhabitants of the island. This phrase is to be found in almost every book and magazine or newspaper article that has ever been published about Jamaica, particularly where the author has been one of the American writers, whose credulity has been alluded to in the first chapter. It has always been regarded as the correct thing to encircle the name "Maroon" with a halo of romance; and this halo, I, not without a certain amount of regret, consider it my duty to dissipate by giving the true outline of their history. All the facts are accessible to any person who will take the trouble to read Dallas's "Maroons" and other works on the subject, which are to be found in the library of the Institute of Jamaica.

When the Spaniards settled in the island on its discovery by Columbus on the 3rd May, 1494

they found it inhabited by a tribe of Arawak Indians; people of gentle and peaceable disposition, living exclusively in settlements on the coast or its immediate neighbourhood, and subsisting almost entirely on fish, eked out with two or three kinds of vegetables, chief of which was the manioc, or, as it is now called, cassava.

Following their usual custom in dealing with the aboriginal races of the New World, the Spaniards proceeded to exterminate these people, and appear to have treated them with greater brutality on account of their gentle and unwarlike nature. One of their own historians tells us how Spanish soldiers would sally forth with swords and pikes, and deliberately kill or maim unoffending individuals who chanced across their path, for pastime or exercise, or to display their prowess with their weapons. They enslaved the Arawaks, and put them to agricultural labour, to which they were entirely unaccustomed, killing them off by slow degrees in that manner.

To escape the cruelty of their masters, the best and strongest among the Indians—physically and morally—left their beloved seashore and took refuge in the mountains of the interior, which hitherto they had never dared penetrate, clothed to their summits with dense forest, and abounding in water, which roared and sparkled, as it does to-day, in crystal streams down every ravine.

In fact the name "Jamaica" is said to be derived from the Arawak word "Xaymaca," which signifies "abounding in wood and water." In these mountain fastnesses they found means of subsistence and pleasant living in the abundance of feathered game, wild

hogs and conies, and a total absence of noxious wild animals: a feature which to this day distinguishes Jamaica from all other tropical countries. The only animals that could possibly be termed noxious were snakes, and of these none were venomous; while at the present day, since the introduction of the mongoose from India, even these have ceased to exist.

As the settlement and cultivation of the island proceeded, and the Arawaks died out, or escaped to the woods, the Spaniards provided against the increasing demand for labourers by the importation of negro slaves from the West Coast of Africa. Of these in their turn those of the strongest physique and most resolute disposition made their escape. Thus the numbers of the fugitive remnant of Arawaks were constantly being augmented by the very pick of the negro slaves from the plantations, and an intermingling of the two races was the natural result. The physical traces of this intermingling persist in certain families and individuals to the present day, although all the original Arawaks must have disappeared at least two centuries ago, while the element of negro blood steadily increased year by year, and now completely preponderates. The hair of the Indian is long and straight, and his complexion of a coppery red; while the negro's hair is short, crisp, and tightly curled, and his skin black—or rather, as the late G. W. Steevens very aptly describes it in his accounts of the Soudan campaign—"damson" colour. In some of the old blue-blooded Maroon families at the present day the skin is of a distinctly coppery tinge, while the hair is much longer than that of the ordinary negro, and presents the appearance of having been highly "frizzed." In fact, hair of that des-

cription is designated by the ordinary negroes as "Maroon hair."

The mode of life and the surroundings of the tribe that thus sprang into existence were such as to ensure the "survival of the fittest" from a physical point of view; and as they were entirely cut off from such influences of civilization as might have trickled to them from the Spaniards, and had no resources of their own in that direction, they remained in a condition of savagery. Indeed it is beyond all question that the lower and more degraded African element among them by degrees introduced the practice of cannibalism; and that it was indulged in by them up to comparatively recent times. Also that the African form of superstition known as Obeah became practically their religion, and is believed in by them now to a greater extent than by the ordinary negro population.

As the history of Jamaica under Spanish rule is virtually a blank, we do not know to what extent the Spaniards suffered from the raids and depredations of the Maroons as they increased in numbers and security from pursuit; but, judging from what occurred in that direction under British rule and in a more settled state of affairs, it is reasonable to infer that they took advantage to the full of their opportunities of avenging themselves upon their oppressors.

In the years 1655 to 1657 they received large additions to their numbers during the conquest of the island by the British. Taking advantage of the confusion created by the military operations and the gradual driving out of the Spaniards, the slaves abandoned the plantations wholesale, and, taking refuge in

the hills, joined the Maroons in such numbers that they became a serious menace to the English themselves. It is possible that some of the more ambitious among them—men who had probably held exalted rank among their tribes in Africa—had visions of a negro kingdom to be established in Jamaica by driving into the sea both the opposing nationalities of whites who were then contending for the possession of the island.

For this is how Major-General Sedgwick, the first Administrator of the island, appointed by Cromwell, speaks of them in 1656, in a letter to Secretary Thurlowe, which is still extant. After relating how they destroyed without mercy any straggling British soldiers whom they chanced to meet, he goes on to say:—"Having no moral sense, and not understanding what the laws and customs of civil nations mean, we know not how to capitulate or treat with any of them. But be assured that they must either be destroyed or brought in upon some terms or the other, or else will prove a great discouragement to the settling of the country." An expedition was sent out against them in 1656, and succeeded in driving them back into the mountains with some loss. But the Maroons retaliated by ambushing and cutting off some forty of the soldiers, whom they slaughtered to a man.

Colonel D'Oyley, Sedgwick's successor, undertook serious operations against them in 1657, and pressed them very hard indeed. About the same time he dealt the last blow to the Spaniards, and expelled them finally from the island; and, intimidated by his success in this direction, the largest body of Maroons, who had been holding out with great obstinacy under a leader calling himself Juan de Bolas, surrendered to

D'Oyley's troops. The hills in which this Maroon leader made his lair are to this day known as the Juan de Bolas mountains.

But there yet remained at large considerable numbers of irreconcilables; and these began to be augmented again by runaways from the slaves, whom the English in their turn now began to import for the purpose of settling and cultivating the country. About this time the name "Maroon" appears to have been definitely applied to these people. The origin of the name is not quite determined. By some authorities it is said to be derived from a French word "Maron," used by the buccaneers to describe fugitive negroes, while by others it is traced to the Spanish word "Cimaron," meaning a certain kind of monkey.

As time went on they increased in numbers and in confidence to such an extent that they occasionally raided the outlying sugar plantations, carrying off invariably the best among the female slaves, and inducing the *élite* of the males to join their ranks. As early as 1663 the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Charles Lyttleton, endeavoured to conciliate them by issuing a proclamation offering to each man who would surrender twenty acres of land, a free pardon, and freedom from slavery. But this does not seem to have had any substantial effect. As cultivation increased, and plantations began to be pushed further into the interior, each planter's house had to be constructed in such a way as to be proof against the attacks of the Maroons; and arms and ammunition were provided and guards were always in readiness. In short, every house was a small fortification. There are some of these houses still in existence, with their

massive stone walls loop-holed for musketry, and, in some cases, underground passages and vaults as a last refuge in case of emergency.

In 1664 the surrendered leader Juan de Bolas himself was appointed Colonel of a regiment of blacks, and sent against them, but was ambushed and killed, with a considerable number of his followers. A subsequent expedition under Captain Colbeck—whose name is perpetuated in the estate of that name on the south side of the island—met with better success; and after four years of constant guerilla warfare temporary peace was secured. During these four years the island had spent £240,000 in the subjugation of the Maroons, while the Legislature had passed no fewer than forty-four enactments having the same object in view.

The next serious trouble occurred in 1730, when another rising took place under a leader bearing the burlesque appellation of "Captain Cudjoe," whose chief haunt was an isolated natural stronghold in the Blue Mountains, in the very heart of the forest, called Nanny Town—Nanny being the name of Cudjoe's chief wife. A successful attack was made on this stronghold by means of the skill, courage and enterprise of a Captain Stoddart, who cut a path through the trackless woods and dragged up by hand, in a direction whence the Maroons never expected any attack, a pair of small cannon, "which," to quote the language of one chronicler, "he fixed to the best advantage and fired so briskly that many were slain in their habitations and several threw themselves headlong down the precipice. Captain Stoddart pursued this advantage, killed numbers, took many prisoners, and in short so completely destroyed or routed the

whole body, that they were unable afterwards to effect any enterprise of moment in this quarter of the island."

To this day the most absurd legends are current amongst the peasantry of the Blue Mountain valleys of the exploits of Cudjoe and the supernatural powers of Nanny. The site of Nanny Town itself is said to be haunted, and certain death is predicted as the fate of any person who shall venture thither unless he be a Maroon.

I have personally visited the spot twice, sleeping there for four nights altogether; and my experiences are very fully described in the little volume entitled "Untrodden Jamaica," which I published in 1891. I may say that I was warned and advised in the strongest manner by many persons of different classes of the community not to venture on the expedition; while the half-dozen faithful negroes who accompanied and guided me, did so in the face of the fervid entreaties of their wives and all their other relatives.

About the same time as the destruction of Nanny Town a defeat was inflicted on the Maroons on the north side of the island by a force under one Captain Edmunds: and these two reverses had the effect of practically bringing them into subjection in the eastern portion of the island; but in the western parts raids still continued. In those districts the country in the interior is even more difficult and inaccessible than the Blue Mountains, though the hills do not rise above 3,000 feet, instead of running up to 6,000 and 7,000 as in the latter. The rock is all limestone of most fantastic formation. Huge caves and fathomless abysses, locally known as "cockpits," abound in

all directions, affording the most complete security to fugitives familiar with the country. The vegetation is rank and dense in spite of the apparent aridity of the soil; while the water supply consists of occasional streams whose course is for the most part underground, breaking out here and there into the light of day at the foot of some lofty cliff, and vanishing again into gloomy and awesome tunnels of living rock. Of course in such a country the Maroons were comparatively secure from pursuit, and the government could only resort to a process of attrition to wear down their resistance. To this end they built barracks in as close proximity as possible to the haunts of the Maroons, which they garrisoned with picked irregular troops, both whites and loyal blacks. These were locally called "white shot" and "black shot." And in 1737 two hundred Indians were brought over from the Mosquito coast of Central America to strengthen these garrisons. These were in their turn known as "Indian shot," and many of the black and coloured people of the western part of the island—as a rule of a very fine physical type—proudly trace their descent from the "black shot" or the "Indian shot." In these latter the mark of the Indian blood is very distinct.

In addition to the human garrisons of these barracks, each was furnished with a pack of dogs for tracking purposes, and these had, by law, to be provided by the *churchwardens* of each parish! Roads were made leading from one barrack to another, and the buildings were strongly constructed and heavily provisioned against emergencies. Excursions were frequently made by the garrisons; and whenever they came across a provision ground of the Maroons they

utterly destroyed everything it contained, thus gradually depriving them of their supply of vegetable food. Remains of these barracks are to be found here and there in the island at the present day; and the memory of others is perpetuated in the name "barracks" which is borne by certain places, apparently without any reason, except to such as are acquainted with the history of the Maroons. These methods proved entirely successful, and amply fulfilled the expectations of their originator, Edward Trelawny, Esq., who was Governor of the island from 1738 to 1751. His name is perpetuated by the parish of Trelawny, the chief town of which is named Falmouth—Trelawny being, of course, a Cornishman. The track also by which Captain Stoddart reached Nanny Town with his guns was kept open, and is called to this day "Trelawny's Path." It is still quite distinct up to a certain point. I have several times traversed it myself. The Maroons were driven to desperate straits, and when Trelawny proposed peace to them in 1738 they eagerly accepted his proposal. But the government did not know the real extent of the extremity to which the Maroons had been driven; so instead of demanding an unconditional surrender, they proposed certain terms, which had the effect of practically maintaining the status of the Maroons as a semi-independent people, instead of merging them into the population. There was no reason whatever why they should not have been thus merged, as—putting aside the slight admixture of Arawak blood, now almost completely effaced—they consisted of the same elements as the rest of the negro population.

However, a regular, formal treaty was drawn up between John Guthrie and Francis Sadler, Es-

quires, representing King George II., of the one part, and Captains Cudjoe, Accompong, Johnny, Cuffee, and Quaco, of the other part. This treaty is dated 1st March, 1738, and provides free pardon to all Maroons except such fugitive slaves as had joined their ranks during the previous two years, unless these of their own will returned to their owners; permission to cultivate lands and bring produce to the markets in the various towns; liberty to hunt hogs up to within three miles of any settlement; in case of meeting hunters from any of these settlements a fair division of the game to be made between the two parties; the Maroons to serve the government of the island against rebels and invaders; in the event of any white man doing injury to a Maroon redress to be applied for before any officer commanding troops; in case of injury to a white man by a Maroon, the offender to be handed over to the whites by Captain Cudjoe; runaway slaves to be captured and brought in at a fee of 30/ per head and all expenses; Captain Cudjoe and his successors to wait on the Governor, or the officer commanding the troops, once a year if so required; Cudjoe and his successors empowered to inflict punishment on their own people, with exception of the death penalty; 1,500 acres of land to be given to the Maroons to form a settlement at Trelawny Town in the parish of St. Elizabeth, and 1,000 acres in the aggregate at Moore Town and Charles Town in the parish of Portland, and Scott's Hall in the parish of St. Mary; the Maroons to keep open and in repair the roads leading from Trelawny Town to Westmoreland and St. Elizabeth. Two white superintendents to be nominated by the Governor, were to reside at Trelawny Town and keep in touch with the Maroons; and

the succession to the chieftainship after Cudjoe was to pass in turn to Accompong, Johnny, Cuffee, and Quaco.

This treaty was a great mistake, as I have already indicated, and it contained the germs of serious trouble to the government, which bore fruit, as we shall see, some sixty years later.

The people to whom this treaty granted numerous privileges which were not possessed by the great bulk of their countrymen throughout the colony were a gang of depraved, ignorant, African savages, the great majority of whom did not know a word of English. Cannibalism, polygamy and obeah worship were practised by all of them. Their intellectual and moral status was, if anything, lower than that of the slaves on the plantations, and very much below that of the free coloured people of the island; and yet they were encouraged to keep themselves apart from, and regard themselves as superior to all of these. They did not take to agricultural labour, except such as could be done by their women, whom they regarded and treated as mere beasts of burden. The post of white superintendent naturally fell to men of low moral calibre; who, so far from exercising any elevating or civilising influence upon the Maroons, regarded their appointment as a means of indulging their own passions in the most unbridled license, without the trouble of having to work for a living. To these also may beyond doubt be traced some of the physical characteristics among the Maroons above described.

The favourite occupation of the Maroons was the hunting of the wild hogs with which the mountains abounded, and the flesh of which they sold in the mar-

kets after curing it by a process which they call "jerking." The so-called Maroons of the present day prepare and sell the flesh of the wild hog just in the same way. After being killed, the animal is cleaned and cut longitudinally into two halves, the hair being removed by singeing. The halves of the carcase are then laid with the skin-side downwards upon grid-iron made of sticks over a slow fire, which slowly grills or dries it. During this process the meat is sprinkled with salt and pepper; and the placing of the aromatic leaves of the pimento tree, or the pepper elder, upon the fire greatly improves the flavour of the meat; which, when properly done, is exceedingly gamey and toothsome. The hogs themselves are lean, and as active as goats. Their food is of the very cleanest, consisting entirely of roots and berries, while their drink is the very purest water. The hunting of them in these precipitous mountains, clothed with dense forest, demands the greatest agility and the most perfect physical condition on the part of both the men and the dogs which they employ. When at bay they are formidable antagonists. I have seen their tusk marks on the trees in the Blue Mountain forests between four and five feet from the ground; and I was present at one hog hunt where, although we never saw the quarry, one dog was killed outright, and another so badly cut that we had to stitch up his wounds. Besides hunting them with dogs, the Maroons also catch them with snares set in the tracks by which they go to and from water, usually well beaten paths.

The vegetables necessary for their sustenance were cultivated, as already stated, entirely by their women; chief among these being the yam, which in

Africa and the West Indies occupies the place filled by the potato in the United Kingdom. But in the fertile soil of Jamaica cultivation, in the proper sense of the word, is hardly necessary. The negro has only to plant in the most perfunctory manner, and his harvest is assured. Besides the wild hogs, the woods abounded with conies and various kinds of pigeon, of which the ringtail, even to the present day, is regarded as the greatest delicacy which the island produces. Mulletts, eels and crayfish swarmed in the rivers, and at certain seasons the land crabs were very plentiful. So of food the Maroons had abundance, and of the best and choicest description. It is no wonder that they thought labour, such as fell to the lot of the slaves on the plantations, undignified.

The Obeahmen were supreme among them. Obeah, if it has any fundamental principles at all, I take to be the propitiation of evil spirits and the invoking of their aid for any objects, good or bad—more frequently the latter—by means of charms and incantations, in which strong rum and the blood of a white cock figure most prominently. It is still believed in and practised very largely among the negroes in Jamaica; but it is much too wide a subject to do more than name here. It demands a chapter to itself; but it may be mentioned that to this day the charms of the Maroon obeahmen are regarded as being much more potent than those of the other practitioners of the art.

Side by side with the Obeahmen were the devotees of Myal, who professed to work counter-charms nullifying the effect of the Obeahman's incantations. When a distinguished guest visited the Maroon townships, a profuse feast, consisting of as

many of the above-named delicacies as could be obtained, was always prepared; and if the visitor remained overnight further hospitality was extended to him in a guise which will scarcely bear a public description. On such occasions the visitor would also be entertained with the spectacle of a sham fight. Decking themselves with branches of trees and the fronds of the tree fern, which was their usual fighting dress on account of its usefulness in rendering them invisible in the foliage of the forest, they went through antics and manoeuvres of the most grotesque description; firing guns, shouting, rolling on the ground, turning somersaults, leaping high in the air, and making hideous grimaces—all accompanied by the sound of the "abeng," the cow's horn by means of which they signal to each other.

To this day they preserve a code of signals on the instrument with the greatest care; but it is known only to the older men.

In the year 1890 I had the honour of conducting Sir Henry Blake, who was then Governor of Jamaica, along with Lady Blake and their daughter to Hayfield, a Maroon settlement in the parish of St. Thomas. I had arranged the visit before-hand, and an advance guard of Maroons met us at the foot of the mountain track that leads from Bath to the village about five miles away, fantastically clad in bush, and armed with ancient muzzle-loaders. As soon as we came in sight they dropped on one knee and fired a blank volley straight at us. This so alarmed the horse that Miss Blake was riding that there was very nearly an accident. I therefore asked the leading man not to allow any more firing in our vicinity, as the road was narrow and dangerous in parts. He gave the word

to a hornman who was near, and this one made a certain blast on his horn, which was repeated by another, and another, and another, higher and higher up, until it died away among the ridges above us. Not another shot was fired in our immediate neighbourhood during the whole of our progress, although we frequently heard them in the distance. On arrival at the settlement we were entertained in a booth built of bamboos and coconut boughs in the yard of the very neat little school-house, where the rising generation were being taught to read and write, while outside their elders were indulging in the strange capers and practices of their savage ancestors. A copious meal of jerked hog and yams was spread before us; and after it we were entertained with a dance, which, although the music was made with a fife and drum, was of a distinctly barbaric character, some of the movements of the dancers being rather too suggestive for decency.

One of the male dancers advanced and retreated in front of Lady Blake with the most graceful of his capers, and holding in his hand a long necklace made from the brilliant red and black seeds of a vine that grows in the woods—called “John Crow beads”—intimating by his gestures a desire to decorate her with it. Lady Blake accordingly bent her head, while the young Maroon, with a deep obeisance hung the necklace about her neck and then backed away, capering more fantastically than ever.

It will no doubt be remembered that among the articles of the treaty was one binding the Maroons to render military service to the government in case of invasion or rebellion. This was based on a false notion which had been popularly conceived of their val-

our. By their mysterious life among the woods, the fine physique resulting from it, their strange garb, the success which they had in ambushing small bodies of troops, and their unspeakable brutality to the fallen, they had rendered themselves objects of dread to the inhabitants of the country generally, and thus earned an utterly undeserved reputation for bravery. This was put to the test on the first occasion when they were called upon to serve the government in a military capacity. In the year 1760 a serious rebellion broke out among the slaves in the parish of St. Mary, most of whom belonged to the fierce and warlike tribe known as Coromantyns. The Maroons who were sent against these distinctly showed the white feather, and fared very badly indeed at the hands of the insurgents; and they would have fared still worse had they not been rescued by a detachment of the 74th Regiment under Major Forsyth, who eventually suppressed the rising. A reward was offered for the capture, alive or dead, of the leader of this rebellion, a Coromantyn named Tackey. A party of Maroons found him one day, alone and unarmed, when they avenged their defeat by killing him on the spot, and afterwards cooking and eating his heart and entrails. They were offered also rewards for the capture of any of the dispersed rebels; and a number of them shortly returned to headquarters with a collection of human ears, which they asserted to be those of fugitive rebels whom they had slain; but these were subsequently found to have been cut from the heads of those who had fallen in the encounter between the soldiers and the rebels at a place called Heywood Hall.

With the exception of the above incident all

seems to have gone quietly and well—for those days—until the year 1795, when two Maroons from Trelawny Town were arrested for stealing pigs, and tried and convicted by a jury at the Quarter Sessions in the town of Montego Bay. They were sentenced to receive 30 lashes each. The punishment was inflicted in the gaol at Montego Bay by a black warder, and the men were discharged immediately afterwards. They returned to Trelawny Town and related what had occurred. The Maroons regarded this flogging—inflicted on two of their number by a negro, who was himself a slave—as an unpardonable insult, and, perhaps justly, as a gross breach of the treaty of 1738. The result was a rising surpassing in gravity anything that had previously occurred. The white superintendent was ordered to quit Trelawny Town at once, and a written defiance was despatched to the Custos and Magistrates at Montego Bay, combined with a threat to attack the town on the 20th July. An attempt was actually made to kill the superintendent, who had taken refuge on a neighbouring plantation. The Militia were called out, and an express messenger was sent off to Spanish Town, then the political capital of the island, to inform the Governor, the Earl of Balcarres, of the state of affairs. Upon this the Governor despatched a detachment of 80 men from a regiment of Dragoons that was then quartered in the island. They arrived at Montego Bay on the 19th July, and their advent probably induced the Maroons to defer their threatened attack on the town and ask for a parley instead with the Custos of the parish. This parley was held on the 20th July, and was attended by some 300 of the Maroons, fully dressed and painted for war. (It must be remembered

that for sixty years they had been unmolested—in fact regarded as the allies of the Government—and naturally increasing enormously in numbers and in confidence in their own strength and prowess.) Their demeanour at this parley was most insolent. They demanded instant and full reparation for the flogging of two of their number by a slave in the presence of other slaves and criminals whom they themselves had been instrumental in apprehending; quite overlooking the fact that under the laws then in force any white man who had been convicted of a similar offence would have been punished in precisely the same manner. The Custos in reply promised to submit the matter for the consideration of the Commander-in-Chief, and the Maroons retired. This parley was only intended to gain time; for before any communication could possibly have been made to the authorities, the Maroons began a series of raids on outlying plantations, burning the buildings, and butchering the white inhabitants, young and old, with merciless cruelty.

In more than one instance white families were saved from destruction at their hands by the devotion of faithful and attached slaves. In the course of these raids the Maroons received further addition to their ranks from among the disaffected slaves.

The principal motive which induced them to gain time by proposing a parley was the fact that they knew that on the 26th July a convoy of 150 sugar-laden ships was to sail from Kingston, which would be escorted by all the available men-of-war, England then being at war with France; and that, besides the 83rd Regiment and the Dragoons already mentioned, there were practically no troops in the island. They

also knew that the latter regiment was under orders to embark on an expedition to the island of San Domingo; and they cherished hopes of being able to induce the other negroes in the island to join them in a general rebellion against the whites. On the very day of the parley they began to tamper with the slaves on the properties about Montego Bay, some of whom warned their masters, and these in turn warned the authorities. But the gentlemen present at the parley had persuaded the government of the good intentions of the Maroons, and the convoy in due course sailed on the 29th. In order to go north, however, the ships had to beat up against the trade wind, and weather the east end of the island, an operation involving some days. On receiving news of the depredations of the Maroons, Lord Balcarres acted with decision and promptitude. He despatched messengers overland to the town of Port Antonio, who left there in a fast-sailing boat two days after the departure of the convoy, and intercepted it off the north-east coast with orders to the senior naval officer to change his course to the westward, run down before the trade wind, and anchor in the harbour of Montego Bay. Lord Balcarres also embarked the 83rd Regiment under Colonel Fitch, 1,000 strong, in the frigate "Success," Captain Pigot, which landed them in Montego Bay on the 4th August; and he placed the whole island under martial law. He also embarked 280 Dragoons under Colonel Sandford, and 130 men of the 62nd Regiment, under Colonel Walpole, on a chartered merchant vessel, which landed them at Black River, on the south side, to hold the Maroons in check in that direction. And on the 4th August Lord

Balcarres himself left Spanish Town for Montego Bay. This prompt action crushed all idea of rebellion among the slaves, and left only the Maroons to deal with. Among these themselves there were divided counsels; the older men advocated peace; but they were out-voted by the younger party, who cried out for the blood of the hated "bockra"—the vernacular term for white man. A proclamation was issued commanding all Maroons to come in and surrender. Some forty of the older men did so, and two of them were sent back to try and persuade the others. These were detained by the warlike party, who thereupon set fire to their town, and finally declared war by making an attack on the nearest party of Militia holding the road to Trelawny Town, whom they dispersed with great slaughter. The subsequent operations were distinguished by all the old traditional British faults. Contempt for the enemy, and disregard of the advice of experienced men resulted in frequent disasters, both to the Militia and the Regulars.

Colonel Sandford paid with his life for an act of disobedience of his express orders; and in the same action Captain G. G. Barrett, of the Militia, owed his safety to the devotion of one of his slaves, who interposed his own breast between his master and the gun of one of the Maroons, receiving the charge himself. It is pleasant to note that this faithful slave survived his injuries. The family of Barrett is still represented in Jamaica, and a notable scion of the English branch of it was the late Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

After Colonel Sandford's death the command devolved upon Colonel Fitch; and he too fell into an ambuscade and was killed, along with five of his men, while Captain Leigh and ten men were wounded,

Leigh afterwards succumbing to his injuries. A party who went to recover Colonel Fitch's body found that his head had been cut off and entombed in his own bowels. This guerilla warfare lasted for months without any appreciable result. The Maroons found shelter in the almost impassable "cockpits," and when hard put to for water they drank that contained in the leaves of the wild pine, a parasite which grows in large quantities on the forest trees, and the natural juice of the water-withe, a vine which abounds in those parts, and which, on being severed, yields a pure fluid exactly like water.

At length, in desperation at the unsatisfactory result of the operations, the Legislature resolved to resort to the extreme measure of importing from Cuba, where slave-catching had been reduced to a fine art, a number of bloodhounds along with their attendant chasseurs to hunt down the Maroons. The command of the troops had passed, on Colonel Fitch's death, to Colonel Walpole, and he had been promoted to the rank of Major General. He protested against what he regarded as an inhuman measure, but in vain, and the bloodhounds were brought over, 100 in number. The Maroons heard of it in due course, and were terrified at the prospect; especially when they heard stories of the size and ferocity of these dogs; one of which was to the effect that on a negro woman attempting to rescue from one of them a piece of meat she was cooking for the soldiers, which the dog had stolen, the animal flew at her, seized her by the throat, and held her in such a grip that its head had to be severed from its body before it could be detached, the woman herself dying of the injuries she had received.

On hearing this, and other stories about the dogs,

the Maroons offered their submission. General Walpole accepted the offer on condition that they should settle in the island as ordinary free negroes, and that all absentees and runaways should report themselves at headquarters within a given time. Three hundred and twenty-six of them thereupon came in and gave up their arms; but as, besides those that had been killed and made prisoners, a large number were still unaccounted for, Lord Balcarres resolved on deporting them from the island. General Walpole again protested, without result; and of all places in the world Nova Scotia was selected as their place of abode. Six hundred of them in all were accordingly transported thither in 1796.

Thus ended the most formidable outbreak that has disturbed the island of Jamaica during its existence of 250 years as a British colony. The suppression of this rebellion cost the country no less a sum than £372,000; but such a sense of relief was experienced by the white population of the island at the termination of the trouble that the Legislature voted a sword of honour to Lord Balcarres and another to General Walpole. Lord Balcarres accepted the gift, but General Walpole indignantly refused it, and accused Lord Balcarres of breaking faith with the Maroons by deporting them to Nova Scotia. Returning to England, he obtained a seat in Parliament, where he brought in a motion denouncing Lord Balcarres. But in a thin House of 39 members he only got five to vote with him.

The Maroons, as must have been foreseen, proved utterly incapable of standing the climate of Nova Scotia, and in a very short time they became pensioners on the charity of the government of that colony.

which presently made a claim on the Jamaica government for £10,000 as compensation; but this little bill was never paid. They were all eventually transhipped to the more congenial region of Sierra Leone, on the West Coast of Africa, where their descendants still exist.

Of course, as already indicated, this exodus did not embrace every individual Maroon in the island. Small bands of them still lurked here and there in the woods; and any runaway slave who joined them became, by virtue of that act, a Maroon. Besides, this rebellion appears to have been confined to the largest settlement, that of Trelawny Town, and not to have been participated in by the denizens of the eastern settlements of Moore Town, Scott's Hall and Charles Town. None of these, however, seem to have given the government any further trouble; and in a serious rising of the slaves which occurred in 1832—also in the vicinity of Montego Bay—there is no record of Maroons having been engaged, either on the side of the slaves or as allies of the government.

Churches and schools were established in their settlements, and a large proportion gradually merged into the ordinary population, while nominally maintaining their status as a distinct body; that is those who still continued to reside in the settlements. After emancipation, many of them settled in the towns and in other parts of the country and took up ordinary occupations. In all parts of the island at the present day you will find men following different callings, who will tell you that they are of "Maroon blood." We have a considerable sprinkling of them in the police force.

The last occasion on which we hear of them acting as a homogeneous body is in the year 1865, during

the disturbances in St. Thomas ye East under the regime of Governor Eyre; disturbances which created considerable excitement in England at the time of their occurrence. The Maroons of Moore Town and the other Eastern settlements were called upon to assist in suppressing the incipient rebellion, and they responded to the call; but in the opinion of many persons who remember those events they displayed a hesitation which appeared to imply that they waited to see first how things were likely to turn out. And when they did proceed against the rebels, they, according to their traditional custom, were responsible for a great deal of the "unnecessary cruelty" which the Royal Commission found to have been used in suppressing the rising. After the disturbances were over a party of them marched to Kingston, where they received the thanks of the Governor, and a reward for the assistance they had rendered.

After the events of 1865 the Constitution of the island was surrendered, and it became a Crown Colony, to its very great advantage. An era of reform was inaugurated; the country was opened up by means of good roads; education was taken in hand; the public service was completely re-organized, and an entirely new order of things was instituted. In short, Jamaica fell into the ranks on the march of civilisation—and has made more progress in the last thirty-five years than in any previous century. Under these conditions the anomalous element of the Maroons, as a separate and semi-independent tribe, distinct from the rest of the population, has gradually disappeared. They have mingled and inter-married with the ordinary inhabitants, and thus themselves helped to break down the distinction. Only those who reside

in the settlements affect to keep up the traditions of the past, and occasionally make a show of asserting their former privileges by claiming exemption from taxes; and now and then by laying claim to lands which they allege to have been devised to them by the government in the past, or by former white superintendents. Such a claim as this was the origin of a disturbance which occurred near Annotto Bay in 1898, attracting some attention in England, and this disturbance was allowed to assume such dimensions as to necessitate the calling out of the military, simply through not being nipped in the bud by the police at the very outset. These people rely on the mystery with which they have been surrounded in the past, and the traditional awe with which they are regarded by all classes of the population of Jamaica—most of whom are totally ignorant of their history—to aid them to achieve their ends by means of “bluff.” My own personal experience of them is that if they are given clearly to understand that they are regarded in precisely the same light as any other of the negroes of the island, and that any attempt at violence will immediately be met by stern and relentless measures, they lose no time in “climbing down,” as our American cousins picturesquely express it.

Any difference that exists between them and the rest of the negro population is entirely in favour of the latter. The so-called Maroons are, as a class, more ignorant, unreliable and superstitious. Their communities are conducted on lines which in some respects have a strong flavour of Socialism. Burials and marriages among them are made occasions of universal festivals to which they all subscribe, making up a common purse by contributions, each ac-

cording to his means. And they elect among themselves certain chiefs, to whom they give the military titles of "major" and "captain." They used to confer the honorary distinction of "colonel" upon some influential white resident in the neighbourhood of their towns—indeed some twenty or thirty years ago this honour was held by a Scotch *lady*, one Mrs. Strachan; but this custom has also now fallen into disuse.

A great number of the men still follow their favourite pursuit of hog-hunting and selling the "jerked" meat in the markets of the different towns. Their usual costume when engaged in this pursuit consists of a shirt and trousers, and a battered old hat or cap, or sometimes a handkerchief tied round the head; while hung from their shoulders they carry a tinderhorn with flint and steel, a calabash gourd containing pepper and salt, and a cutlass, or "machete" in a scabbard made from the flower sheath of the cabbage palm. A knife and, sometimes, an "abeng" completes the equipment.

Instead of carrying loads perched on the top of the head, as other negroes do, they rest them on their backs, suspended by a rope passed round the fore part of the head. The advantage of this method of carriage through dense forest is obvious. On the various expeditions which I have made in the untrodden depths of the Blue Mountains my own men always carried their loads in this manner—"Maroon fashion" as they called it. I may remark that the expeditions which I made to Nanny Town, and also another subsequent one which I undertook across the John Crow Mountains, a frightfully repellent and entirely unknown range to the east of the Moore Town settlement, caused great uneasiness among them.

This was very forcibly demonstrated at a public ceremony in the town of Port Antonio which Sir Henry Blake, the Governor of the island, attended a couple of months afterwards. He was conversing with one of the gentlemen present about my recent expedition in the hearing of an aged Maroon, when the latter turned round to Sir Henry and in angry and indignant tones denied the fact that I had been to the places named, asserting that it was quite impossible for me to do so and return unharmed.

On another occasion my chief guide and woodsman on my exploring expeditions, Hibbert, fell in with a party of them at a rumshop in a village in the Blue Mountain Valley, where they were selling jerked hog, and my Nanny Town expedition came under discussion, meeting with the same indignant denial of my achievements. A little later Hibbert took one of the men, whom he knew very well, aside and said to him:—"Now, Mr. So-and-So, don't you know very well that Inspector Thomas went to Nanny Town with us, and slept there two nights?" The reply was, "Well, Mr. Hibbert, we can't deny it, but we don't want those other 'naygurs' to think that it is true."

Chapter XVIII.

THE MAROONS (CONTINUED.)

The foregoing chapter formed the substance of a lecture which I gave at the Imperial Institute in January, 1902, with Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wylie Norman, G.C.M.G., a former Governor of Jamaica under whom I had served, in the chair; and it so happened that a couple of years after my return to the island I was brought into much closer contact with these people than I had previously been, and was afforded the fullest opportunity of verifying and confirming the estimate of their character which I had formed, as set forth above.

On taking command of the police of St. Elizabeth in 1904, I found the embers still smouldering of an agitation which the Maroons of Accompong Town had started some months previously respecting the area of the land allotted to them by the treaty above described as having been concluded by the government in 1738 between King George II. and Capt. Cudjoe, Accompong, and other savages. This allotment was supposed to consist of 1,500 acres of Crown land, and it was abundantly adequate to their requirements at the date of the treaty. But in the course of a hundred and seventy years, owing to the natural increase of the population, and to their crude methods of cultivation, in which the use of fire plays an important part, this land—which, it must be admitted, is far from being of the best quality—gradual-

ly became exhausted, both in area and fertility. As a natural result the Maroons began to encroach on their neighbours, who appealed to the government for protection. A survey was made by the Surveyor-General's department, and it was found that the original limits of the settlement had indeed been very largely over-stepped, to the detriment of the owners of the adjoining land. These had no doubt tacitly acquiesced in the trespass, until it began to be discovered that the land in that district was suitable for the cultivation of bananas, which industry was just then rapidly increasing. At the outset the government handled the situation in the same kid glove fashion as it had done on previous occasions, thus encouraging the Maroons in the belief that they still enjoyed special privileges. Of course in the end they had to resort to stronger measures, before the Maroons were driven back within the boundaries of the original concession, sullen and resentful.

It so happened, however, that there was among their ranks a man who had served for ten years in the constabulary and had retired from it after attaining the rank of corporal. He was a very fine character; and he enjoyed the additional prestige of being own brother to the so-called "Colonel" of the Maroons. He was offered the appointment of rural constable for Accompong. He accepted it; and right faithfully, loyally and impartially did he fulfil his duties and obligations as long as he held the post. He was appointed very shortly before I went to the parish; and after assuming charge I lost no time in visiting Accompong Town and passing a night at his house, where my wants were attended to by his very

shrewd and capable wife, a woman who was not herself a Maroon, but whom he had married while serving in the police. I used to visit the place periodically, and in a very short time I had the Maroons all "feeding out of me 'and"—as the London bus-driver said of the load of German prisoners whom he brought in to the British lines during one of the early engagements of the war. The moral support which my visits rendered were invaluable to the rural constable; and at each one I used to hold a sort of informal court, imparting advice and instruction, and settling disputes—sometimes even of a domestic nature—with satisfactory results. I contrived to convey to them all the impression that any return to a rebellious and stiff-necked attitude would be dealt with in a very drastic manner; and they quite realised that there was an iron hand underneath the velvet glove.

There was however a small faction among the older and more ignorant ones who resented this new order of things, regarding it as a curtailment of their ancient privileges, the chief and most lucrative of which had always been the illicit traffic in rum smuggled along the bush tracks from sugar estates in the adjacent parishes, both on the north and the south sides of the island. I very soon got on the track of these die-hards, and proved conclusively that the King's writ did run in Accompong Town, by causing a seizure to be made of quite a large quantity of rum which had never paid duty, at the house of one of the old Maroons—a man of considerable substance—and having him and two of his accomplices arrested and conveyed to the nearest police station. This duty was very ably and efficiently carried out on a moonlight

night by my sergeant at Balaclava station, (Anderson, afterwards sergeant-major, and now retired). Some show of resistance was put up, and an attempt made to stampede the police horses. I purposely abstained from interfering myself, in order to show the Maroons that the rank and file were quite capable of dealing with them. But I spent the night in the vicinity, standing by to take a hand if the occasion had required it.

When the case came on for trial, the defendants and their friends went to the expense of bringing down a barrister all the way from Kingston to conduct the defence, while I myself undertook the prosecution. The facts being entirely beyond dispute, I learned counsel for the defence, (who, I may remark, has since risen to eminent rank in the service of the Colonial Government), actually had the hardihood to plead the precious "treaty" which is quoted above. I cannot help thinking he must have done it with his tongue in his cheek; but he produced a paper which purported to be a copy of this document, and attempted to put it in evidence. I at first objected to its being received at all, but the Resident Magistrate conveyed to me by means of those proverbial nods and winks which are so clear to a blind horse, such a keen desire to deal with the treaty, that I at once waived my objection, and it was duly put in evidence.

After hearing counsel's address on the provisions of this document, and stating that no reply from me was required, the court proceeded, metaphorically speaking, to tear it into minute fragments and trample it underfoot. The treaty was dissected paragraph by paragraph, and it was pointed out

in scathing terms what an absurd anachronism the whole tenor of it had been reduced to by the march of civilization, in the first decade of the twentieth century.

The result of the trial was a conviction on the charge of unlawful possession of rum, and the imposition of exemplary fines. There was an additional charge of resisting the police in the execution of their duty, and this was also proved, and dealt with in like manner. The chief defendant was unable to pay the fine imposed on him, and he was accordingly haled off to Spanish Town gaol to serve the alternative term of imprisonment; to the great consternation and chagrin of the Maroons, who were all thus convinced that my warnings to them had been no mere idle talk. The law of the land having been triumphantly vindicated in this manner, and the amenability of the Maroons to it having been conclusively established, there has not, so far as I am aware, been any further trouble of this description; certainly not prior to my finally leaving St. Elizabeth in 1921. In the following year, if I remember rightly, some fresh land trouble did arise with a couple of the Accompong people. It was referred by the Governor to me—then stationed in Westmoreland—as being the competent authority on the subject, and I gave what I considered the best advice. Incidentally I offered to put an end to the whole affair within twenty-four hours if they would send me to Accompong; but I never heard anything further about it.

I should state that, realising the importance of the issues involved in this prosecution—which was really a test case—I had taken certain secret precau-

tions against any serious demonstration by the Maroons such as would have given them the surprise of their lives if they had attempted anything of the sort. But although the little courthouse and its yard at Balaclava station were crowded with between two and three hundred of them who had come to hear the case, a few words of admonition from me proved sufficient to allay a certain amount of excitement which began to manifest itself when the judgment of the Court was pronounced; and everything passed off without any symptoms of disturbance.

Now, it appears to me that all persons of normal mentality will agree that the proceedings in this case had achieved a very desirable result. The anomalous and anachronistic nature of the status of the Maroons and of their alleged "treaty" had been ruthlessly exposed, and they had been brought into line with the rest of the population in the eyes of the criminal law. But it will scarcely be believed that there were to be found persons who thought otherwise; and those not native Jamaicans, but practical and hard-headed Scotsmen. The attitude which these gentlemen took up in the matter affords the most striking illustration of the extraordinary glamour which has been allowed to envelop the Maroons in the course of a couple of centuries, as previously described.

The numerically small religious sect known as the "Church of Scotland," which flourishes in this country, along with many others, had established some years previously a school and chapel at Accompong Town, which the pastor in charge of the district used to visit at stated periods—about once a month; and he thought it his duty to report to the head of

his church, residing in Kingston, the circumstances of the case, and to call attention to the injustice which had, in his opinion, been inflicted on the Maroons. This latter gentleman in his turn approached the Governor of the island on the subject, and entered into correspondence with His Excellency, pointing out—to put it shortly—that the action of the police and the judgment of the court constituted a breach of the “treaty,” and should be repudiated by the government. The entire correspondence was printed in the *Jamaica Gazette* of the 15th March, 1906, and the last paragraph but one of the reverend gentleman’s report read thus:—

“If, however, such methods are pursued we fear that there will be created in their minds (i.e., those of the Maroons) a suspicion that these attempts have but one object, viz., to gradually deprive them of their ancient rights and privileges and therefore (create?) a state of affairs that may lead to serious disquietude, if not riot.”

As a sample of special pleading and specious argument the letter is hard to beat; and the facts stated are all of course derived from the accused and their friends. It is a very common thing for ignorant and uneducated peasants to worry the government to go behind the judgments of courts by means of *ex parte* statements; but one does not expect such things from ministers of the Church of Scotland, or any other church. However, the Governor at the moment was, fortunately, Sir James Alexander Swettenham, who, however objectionable he might be in his methods of treating his subordinates in the public service, was at any rate a man of his hands, and one about whom

there was not the least ambiguity. He dealt with the matter of the prosecution, as well as with other matters germane to it arising out of the "treaty," in the most detailed and exhaustive manner, quoting former correspondence, and decisions of previous Governors; and generally affording to his petitioners a mass of useful information on the subject, of whose existence they had previously not had any knowledge whatever. It is precisely the encouragement which these people have from time to time received through the no doubt well-meaning and sincere, but misguided interference of such persons as these Scotch ministers which has imbued them with a totally exaggerated estimate of their own importance. I think, however, that it is now safe to say that the reply made by Sir J. A. Swettenham to the said Scotch ministers dealt them a stroke from which they have never recovered. The day of the once dreaded Maroon is past, and the glamour has been stripped from them in the eyes of those who are conversant with the circumstances. Only in one respect does any trace of that glamour still survive, and that is in the belief which is cherished by the population in their skill as practitioners of Obeah, of which one striking instance will be given in due course, in the chapter dealing with that superstition. It will suffice to say here that subsequent to the events which are narrated above we arrested no fewer than three men charged with serious crimes, two of them murderers, whom we had tracked to Accompong Town; they having gone thither in order to invoke the aid of the Maroon obeahmen in their flight from justice. And not long before I finally left Westmoreland we intercepted another who, also

charged with murder, was on his way to the same place, on a similar errand, from the latter parish.

During the Great War I read in the papers that these people had offered their services to the government, as Maroons, an allegedly organized body separate and distinct from the rest of the black people of the island. It pleased me to note that the authorities did not appear to take this offer seriously. I have no doubt that in this respect they very correctly gauged the amount of sincerity with which it was made. To me it was supremely ridiculous.

In the previous chapter I have made mention of an attempt at land-grabbing on the part of Maroons in the parish of St. Mary which was allowed to develop to such an extent that a detachment of the Leinster Regiment was eventually marched down from Newcastle for the purpose of quelling the disturbance. It has always been an inexplicable mystery to me why the trouble was not nipped in the bud by the police at the very outset. However, I had nothing to do with it, directly or indirectly, being then stationed in Trelawny; but I was transferred to Saint Mary a few months later, and I shall presently describe how I dealt with an attempt which was in contemplation for a recrudescence of this agitation. This disturbance was organized by alleged Maroons of Scott's Hall and Charles Town settlements in Saint Mary, and the piece of land to which they laid claim formed a portion of Gibraltar, the property of Mr. A. C. Westmorland, who is now Custos of the parish. This land, which lies just outside the town of Annotto Bay, is known by the name of "Fyffe's Pen"; and the claim made by the Maroons was that it had been

devised to them by a former owner of the name of Fyffe, one of the white "Colonels" mentioned in a previous portion of this history. One fine day in 1898 a mob of these people made a descent upon this land, armed with cutlasses and—some of them—with their ancient muzzle-loading shot-guns, cut down the fences, and took forcible possession of it; defying all attempts to persuade them to withdraw. Of course once the ball was started it gathered and increased in size like a snowball, and any vagabond banana ruffian from Annotto Bay, that joined the mob thereby at once became a Maroon; until the land itself and that portion of Annotto Bay adjoining were transformed into two armed camps. I am not in a position to give all the pitiful details; but I know that in spite of there being some two hundred armed police on the scene, with an Inspector-General—who was about the most weird specimen of an official ever imported into this country—nothing was done. The Maroons—real and fictitious—were allowed to remain on the spot until Tommy Atkins came tramping down from Newcastle, when they melted away, without a shot being fired. Now, I make bold to assert, from my own subsequent knowledge of the circumstances and of these people, that they could not possibly have organized this raid with such cunning and secrecy as entirely to conceal their intentions from the police. I recollect experiencing a keen sense of shame and humiliation when reading of English troops being brought down from Newcastle to tackle a job that the Jamaica Constabulary had apparently "funked." However, let us draw a veil: it was not the fault of the rank and file. The officers in charge at the time are long since dead.

This episode occurred in 1898, just about the close of the Spanish-American War, and it was witnessed by more than one home-returning English newspaper correspondent, and reported to several journals in the old country accordingly.

In February, 1899 I was transferred from Trelawny to St. Mary; and a description of the conditions I found prevailing there has already been given in a previous chapter of this book, although this particular episode has not been alluded to. The sergeant-major of the division was one of the few black sheep among the men who had been imported by Sir Henry Blake from the Royal Irish Constabulary, and it did not take me long to find out that his removal would be highly desirable. (He was a first class man in a row, like most of his race, but that was not everything.) So I persuaded the Inspector General, Mr. E. F. Wright—who always afforded me the most wholehearted support in such matters—to send me the man I had left in Trelawny, where he was “wasting his sweetness on the desert air.” (He was in later years promoted Deputy Inspector General over my head, as described in Chapter XIII.) In him I had the most absolute confidence; and the task of licking St. Mary into shape was divided between us. His splendid physique was a great asset; he succeeded me in the command of the parish, after receiving a commission, and remained there for many years.

I soon found the Inspector's quarters in Port Maria too small, and altogether inconvenient for my numerous family; so I consulted the Custos of the parish, Dr. Pringle—he had not yet been knighted—on the matter. He had known me for many years before I came

to St. Mary, and his great desire was to have me as near to himself as possible; being at that time the largest landed proprietor in Jamaica with exception of the United Fruit Company. His own residence, Cape Clear, was not far from the seat of the Maroon disturbance just described, and one of his properties, Agualta Vale, actually adjoined Gibraltar. So the delightful old house on that place being vacant, he prevailed upon the Governor, Sir A. W. L. Hemming, to allow me to rent out the quarters in Port Maria and transfer my residence to Agualta Vale. In order to meet the difficulties of the increased travelling thus involved he gave me the free use of two of his horses, in addition to pasturage for my own; and for nearly eighteen months I was in clover—thanks to his kindness, and that of his sainted wife, who proved a veritable fairy godmother to my children.

About the middle of 1900 I received from Mr. Westmorland at Gibraltar information of a confidential nature which convinced me that the Maroons were contemplating another raid on Fyffe's Pen similar to that of 1898. Immediately on receipt of this I went to Kingston by the first train on the following morning—a Sunday—and saw the Inspector General. I imparted to him all the information which Mr. Westmorland had given me, and told him what I proposed to do. He entirely approved of my plans; but said that he would like first to lay the whole situation before the Colonial Secretary, and made an appointment with me for a later hour in the day. When I saw him again he told me that my proposals had found favour at headquarters, and directed me to return by the first train on Monday morning—there

used to be two each way every day at that time—and take the measures which I had suggested; while he would keep an armed party of thirty men and a sergeant-major standing by with a special train ready to bring them over in case I should wire him to that effect. In parting from me he said:—"Thomas, I won't come myself, although I should like to, because I think you are quite capable of seeing the affair through yourself, and I want you to have all the credit for it. I intended coming over to inspect your division next week, but anyhow, if I do come before you have finished this business I won't supersede you." I accordingly arrived at Annotto Bay early in the forenoon of the next day, and after ascertaining that everything was still quiet, proceeded to Agualta Vale, returning to Annotto Bay in the afternoon to inaugurate my plan of campaign. I had arranged by telegram from Kingston that as many men as could be spared from Port Maria and other stations in the parish should arrive at Annotto Bay not later than noon on the Tuesday, all fully armed and provided with ball cartridge. Knowing as I do the psychology of the people with whom I had to deal, I foresaw that the news of the appearance of the first batch of these would be wafted abroad on the wings of the wind, and give them "furiously to think." Now, there was living very near the police station at Annotto Bay a certain Maroon, running a smithy and a coach-building establishment, whose name had been given to me as the ringleader in the trouble which was brewing. He used to do all my own blacksmith's and carriage work, and I was on very friendly terms with him; but the circumstances I am now discussing proved him

to be just a good example of that shiftiness which I have described as being characteristic of these people. He was very intelligent, and well-spoken; so much so that I frequently lent him books and magazines. In appearance he was tall, erect, and although black, with nothing negroid about his features. His hair was of the sort which I have described as "Maroon." I liked the man; and never, unless I was in a great hurry, failed to pull up at his establishment and pass the time of day with him. But it now became necessary, in the light of the very complete information which Mr. Westmorland had obtained, to treat him in my sternest manner.

It should be clearly understood that in dealing with persons of his type a good command of impressive language is of the greatest value; and the language becomes very much more impressive when the person to whom it is addressed knows that the word and the blow are not at all far apart. I accordingly sent my Sergeant, Kenny—afterwards promoted to sergeant-major, and now deceased—to summon my Maroon friend to a private interview at the station, in the afternoon after my return from Kingston. He came, and in Kenny's presence I addressed him for some twenty minutes, without allowing him once to open his mouth. Beginning by telling him that his intentions were an open book to me, I gave him a brief summary of the history of the Maroons, from their origin down to the late raid on Fyffe's Pen. I impressed on his mind the fact that the so-called privileges which had been conferred on them by a weak and misguided government in the eighteenth century had now, by effluxion of time and the march of civili-

zation, been reduced to an anachronism and become a dead letter. I deplored the fact that in 1898 it had been thought necessary to call out white troops to deal with Maroon robbers, thus encouraging them in the belief that the police of the island were not capable of doing so; and I assured him that a renewal of such an attempt would give them the surprise of their lives at the hands of the Jamaica Constabulary, led by myself. I wound up by painting a vivid picture of the condition in which they would find themselves when I had finished with them, and told him that he himself would be the first man to perish if I saw him there. With this peroration I dismissed him from my presence. When he entered my office he was black; when he left it he was more the colour of a new slate. I produced the exact effect which I had intended. There was not then, and there never has been since, any attempt to renew the raid on Mr. Westmorland's property. I kept the reinforcements from the other stations at Annotto Bay for several days longer, and before the end of the week Mr. Wright paid his promised visit of inspection. I then turned out quite a large parade on the beach of the United Fruit Company's premises, in the course of which we expended about ten rounds of blank cartridge per man in volley-firing. The entire population assembled to witness it; and if there were still any embers smouldering of the proposed agitation, they were finally and completely extinguished by that warlike display. I was forcibly reminded of this episode, and of the whole of the St. Mary land campaign touched on in Chapter X., by almost the last words spoken to me by Mr. Wright before the outbreak of

the riot in Montego Bay on the night of the 6th April 1902. Lulled into a sense of false security by the protestations of the wiseacres who had taken charge of him, as described in Chapter XI., he, poor man, all unconscious of the trouble that was then so near at hand, intimated to me his intention of returning to Kingston on the following day, and wound up by saying:—"Thomas, I know I can trust you to put the fear of God into them (the Montego Bay mob) like you did in St. Mary." It was a real pleasure to serve under a man who could thus appreciate one's work, and give one full credit for it.

The tablet to his memory which adorns a wall of the Halfway Tree Church, was placed there by the officers and men of the force.

Chapter XIX.

OBEAH.

The black cloud of this degrading relic of African superstition lowers over the moral and social horizon of Jamaica with a steadily increasing threat. It gives no sign whatever of being dispersed by the religious and educational influences, and least of all by the various legal enactments, that are constantly attacking it; but, on the contrary, appears to gain in gloom and intensity. In past years when I used to devote a great deal of attention to this subject, I always consoled myself with the reflection that the days in which Obeah was an accessory to crimes of violence had gone by, and that it had degenerated into a merely silly and comparatively harmless method of gulling the ignorant and superstitious; but recent events have proved that I was labouring under a delusion. There have occurred in quite recent times within a short distance of the capital of this island two horrible cases of cold-blooded murder, committed at the instigation of obeahmen, which have caused the public to gasp with horror and astonishment. If these are to be regarded as a sign of the times, then Jamaica is indeed in a parlous condition.

During my sojourn in the parish of St. Thomas, which is described in a previous chapter, besides conducting a vigorous campaign against Obeah, in which I secured a considerable number of convictions under the then existing laws, I wrote a good deal on

the subject. Some of my writings attracted attention abroad, for mention was made of them in *Chambers's Journal* of February, 1902. I also made an interesting collection of various implements used by obeahmen, and books kept by them, for the Jamaica Exhibition of 1891, which I placed in a show-case, paying for the space occupied, in the hope that my exhibit would be of some use in combating the superstition. Much to my surprise I received within a fortnight of the opening of the Exhibition a polite request from the Commissioners to remove my exhibit, on the ground that it was "unfavourably affecting the attendance." (No suggestion was made of a refund of the price I had paid for the space.) At the same time the proprietor of one of the side-shows, an optical illusion which was labelled "Amphrite the Living Obeah" was directed to remove from his sign the last word, so that it read from then onwards "Amphitrite the Living —." I think that it was only then that I began to realize what a real power Obeah is in the land, and I have learnt a great deal since; the two cases of murder above referred to having given the finishing touch to my education. Almost invariably when raids are made by the police on obeahmen, and their premises searched, letters are found from persons, some of whom are evidently intelligent and well educated, asking the obeahman's assistance in respect of health, success in business, the obtaining of employment, love affairs, and many other matters. In fact, my experience in this direction has been such that I should not think of attempting to draw a line at any one particular stratum of society and saying: "Here the belief in Obeah ends." I have in my possession now corre-

spondence with the Education department of the island which ensued on my reporting to them that we had found in the house of a notorious obeahwoman—for the practitioners belong to both sexes—a letter of introduction which two would-be clients had brought to her from the master of a government school. I can only say that no action whatever was taken by the department against the schoolmaster concerned.

A large proportion of such correspondence comes from persons residing in Cuba, Costa Rica, Panama, Colon, and other places to which our people emigrate. Believers in Obeah are to be found in almost every walk of life. The very ministers of religion of the different denominations, if they will be honest with themselves, will admit hearing that among such are members of their congregations, and even of their church committees. The average negro of the labouring class will have no scruple about letting the doctor and the parson starve, but he will always find money for the obeahman, and the lawyer. I do not mean by this any disrespect to the legal profession, but merely to indicate the fact that the negro is naturally of a litigious disposition, and not infrequently employs the obeahman as an auxiliary to the lawyer—without the latter's knowledge of course.

Some of the more ambitious practitioners set up on pieces of unoccupied land in remote districts regular healing establishments, which they call "balm-yards," (balm of Gilead, I presume), in which they administer to their patients, besides magic potions accompanied by ritualistic incantations, corporeal mortification of the flesh by flogging them with switches,

to drive out the evil spirits. I have seen in such a place as many as fifteen or twenty little huts of saplings and dry grass built up around a larger central one, the dwelling-place of the prophet, each with a little red flag flying from it; while outside the surrounding fence were gathered donkeys, mules, horses, buggies, and even motor cars, which had borne patients to the establishment.

I had to do with one case in St. Elizabeth in which the father of a lad who had actually passed the examination qualifying him for the post of pupil teacher in a government elementary school, had apprenticed him to one of these professors of the black art. Now, many people will no doubt ask "what is Obeah?" The reply is that it is in principle nothing more than a belief in witchcraft, or the attainment of desired ends by the aid of occult means. That is in itself nothing very alarming. Not a century and a half ago witchcraft was an offence recognized by the law of England. As is well known, John Wesley believed in it, to such an extent that he said to give up that belief would be tantamount to surrendering his belief in the Bible. But where this cult is practised in such a degrading manner as obtains among its votaries in Jamaica, often for the vilest purposes—leaving crime out of the question—and earning an easy and lucrative living for its high priests, then it can only be described as an open, festering sore on the body politic of the country. Many of the details of Obeah cases which I have wrung from the lips of trembling and ashen-hued witnesses in the courts are entirely unprintable.

The stock-in-trade of the average obeahman con-

sists as a rule of articles, scraps, and fragments of a ridiculous nature. He always has a small pocket mirror, a piece of white chalk, a glass marble or two, a few dogs' or alligators' teeth, a pack of cards, feathers, or perhaps the beak and feet of a bird of some kind, a reel of black thread, a few shells of peculiar shape, a bunch of negro hair, a little asafoetida or stick sulphur, resin taken from a mango tree, and all sorts of rubbish of similar kinds. A pint of rum is also necessary to his incantations, and on great occasions a white cock is sacrificed, whose blood must be preserved, while its flesh is cooked and served up with rice. The incantations used at the ceremony consist of "unknown tongue," or a flow of jabbering words which do not form part of any known language. Some of the obeahmen have a wonderful gift, of reeling off these without a pause for minutes together.

A frequent mode of procedure on the part of the obeahman is this:—He casts a lustful eye on some good-looking girl who takes his fancy, and, finding his advances repulsed, decides to invoke the aid of his art. He approaches the girl's mother and drops a hint that the daughter is not looking well, and he fears that she is going to be very ill unless certain precautions are taken. The mother repeats these hints to the daughter; and the latter, responding to a form of auto-suggestion which is not uncommon among primitive races, actually does begin to fail in health. The obeahman continues to work on the mother's feelings, and finally induces her to consent to receive him at her house on a day to be fixed, in order that he may subject the girl to his treatment,

which has but one end in view. Sometimes he achieves his aim, but sometimes he does not, as happened once in a very celebrated case in the parish of St. Thomas. In this instance the obeahman stood much higher in the social scale than the ordinary professor of the art. He was a little brown man, always neat and dapper in appearance, very intelligent and well educated, having been a schoolmaster and a Wesleyan local preacher. His procedure revealed a good deal of originality. Having obtained the consent of the family of the girl, who were honest and well-to-do, but very ignorant black people, he was allowed access to their house on a moonlight night. He went through a most elaborate ceremonial, at which he persuaded the whole family to assist. His implements were carried in a small leather portmanteau, and they included a human skull, and about six inches of human thigh-bone. Donning a kind of surplice, he headed a ceremonial march by the family round and round the house, finally leading them to a brick tomb that stood in the yard. There he cut branches from an overhanging calabash tree, handed one to each of his followers, and made them beat the tomb, taking the time from him, for some minutes, while he sang a chant in the "unknown tongue." Then, marching them back into the house, he made them stick the calabash branches into the thatch over the rafters. He next had the rum and the white cock, which had been duly provided, brought in, opened the bottle and poured some of the spirit into a glass. Then he cut off the head of the cock, allowing some of the blood to drain into the glass with the rum. Pouring the mixture of blood and rum into the thighbone, one end of which was stoppered with wax, he then

tried to persuade the girl's parents and brothers to drink some. They refused, but he drank a portion of it himself, and spilt the remainder on the floor.

Various other performances were gone through while the flesh of the cock and the rice were being cooked, and when these were ready he partook of a hearty meal, but the family were too stricken with disgust and terror to eat. Finally, when after his supper he insisted that the girl and her mother should accompany him into the bedroom, what he began there suddenly aroused the indignation of both father and mother to such a degree that they ejected the rascal from the house, and on the following day came straight to me at Morant Bay. We worked up the case against him with complete success; actually finding his bag, which he had thrown away in the woods, with all the implements described, and he was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment and twenty-five lashes with the cat-o'-nine tails. He had been paid a fee of £5 by the deluded people. I quote this case for the reason that it is the most celebrated and important one that I ever had to do with. The accused was able to bring a solicitor all the way from Kingston to defend him.

It sometimes happens that a remarkable coincidence occurs which tends to support the pretensions of some of these people, and to increase the power which they wield. A noteworthy instance of the kind came within my experience in St. Elizabeth at a place called Balaclava. I had taken proceedings against a particularly impudent black man who used to combine the illicit practice of medicine with that of Obeah. He was fairly educated, and intelligent, up to a certain

point. He claimed to possess a medical diploma, obtained by correspondence from some American college of medicine. I was prosecuting him under the Medical Laws of the colony, and I had a complete case against him, in which the Government District Medical Officer was absolutely necessary as a technical witness. The case was to come off on a Monday, and on my arriving at the court I received information that the doctor had been found dead in his bed that morning, after having retired to his room at ten o'clock on the previous night apparently in perfect health. It afterwards transpired that he had for some time been suffering from diabetes, and had passed away in a diabetic coma. At least, that was the pronouncement of the medical man who made the post mortem examination; but the general belief of course was that his death had been caused by the magic of the man against whom he was to have given evidence, and whose reputation was thereby enhanced in proportion. I had no alternative but to withdraw the case; and this was undoubtedly a signal triumph for the powers of evil.

Some years afterwards I prosecuted another rascal of similar type, who had boldly assumed the title of "Reverend," and travelled about the parish wearing a surplice, and baptising children. He circulated pamphlets in which he described himself as "Licensed by the Government of Jamaica to baptise for the Jamaica Evangelical Independent Baptist Revival Reversionary Bond (sic) of Hope Association." Along with the pamphlets he distributed photographs of himself in full canonicals. He was for a time very successful in obtaining quite considerable sums of

money, and value in kind, from the ignorant; but I had the satisfaction of bringing his career to an abrupt close by convictions on two charges of practising Obeah, and sentences of eighteen months' hard labour. This man was of a more ambitious nature and, I must confess, displayed more originality than the rest of his kind; in proof of which some of his publications are produced below:—

“THE GREAT WONDERS AND MYSTERIES OF
THE AGE.

Read, think and wonder, about the Electric Medical Machine that cures all sorts of human sickness, without drugs, pains or knife. Rev. Dr. Simeon Luther Blagrove, the Medical Electric Specialist. At last he has arrived. Permanent health for the sick women and men, uncle and cousin, old and young. By a Machine that is recommended by some of the world's most famous Doctors and leading men in the hospitals of Europe, America and other countries, and is known as one of the greatest in the world. A friend of the rich and a company to the poor. Remember the name, “White Cross Electric Vibrator.” It handles and operates a force that is superior to all other medical science, and yet harmless. It passes the healing power through the body in countless minutes, and immediately gives health, happiness and success to the poor sufferer. Here is a man who has devoted his time, talent, learning, and energy in studying a force that overcomes pains and all other ailments among suffering humanities and is now professed to demonstrate the true side of healing. This is

the man from Orient; just from the East. Simeon Luther Blagrove, of Kingston, Jamaica, is a lucky born from a lucky planet, Jupiter, the brightest of the seven. He is specially endowed with the power of healing by the authority of the King's highest representative, Jesus of Nazereth, King of the Jews. The Machine is guaranteed to cure Facial Blushes, Warts, Moles, Colds, Coughs, Cramps, Constipation, Consumption, La-gripe, Weakness, Headache, Dumbness, Deafness, Lamé Eyes, Blindness, Sore Throat, Bad Bowels, Lamé Back, Strains, Sprains, Dropsy, Fits, Rheumatism and every description of ailments. The doctor, Mr. Blagrove, is a native of Jamaica, born Sunday, June 30, 1874; had taken his Educational degrees at the Church of England, received the gift of the Divine by the Spirit of conversion 1894; ordained a Minister of religion, December 21, 1899, after the Baptist order; granted the privilege of a license to deal in medicinal herb, October, 1901, by the authority of His Excellency Sir L. A. W. Hemming, after writing a petition, became a student with the International School of Chemistry, Scranton, Pennsylvania, U. S. A., 1907, including a variety of studies from other correspondence Colleges. He is fitted to fill a place of honour and trust among those of the respectability. In 1913 he had been specially appointed the place of a President for a society under the name of the St. Elizabeth Evangelical Revival Reversionary Band of Hope Association, the aim of which is to promote a revival of religion among all good people. Turning back to his present engagement

he now fully claims to be a Vendor of medicines, Minister of religion and Specialist in Medical Electricity. His patients are thoroughly examined by the aid of a powerful Ex-ray lamp which enables him to read through the body as if it was made up of glasses. All letters with birthday and date should be forwarded to the address of Rev. S. L. Blagrove at

.....District
.....P.O.

At even ere the sun was set
The sick O Lord around Thee lay,
O with what divers pain they met
O with what joy they went away.

S. L. BLAGROVE.

“It is a good thing for brethren to dwell together in Unity.” Unity is Strength.

THE ST. ELIZABETH REVIVAL EVANGELICAL REVERSIONARY BAND OF HOPE ASSOCIATION.

This Society is organized by a progressive band of men and women residents of Jamaica, B.W.I. The aim of which is to promote a revival among all God's people. The Society agreed that a form of government be made as a protection of the Christian converts and the promotion and elevation of Christ's holy cause.

To have the affairs of the Society methodically managed, the members unitedly appoint the REV. SIMEON LUTHER BLAGROVE of Kingston, Jamaica, B.W.I. to be their President.

The Rules and Bye-Laws of the Association conferred the power on the President to have a Trust Deed signed at His Majesty's Supreme Court for the protection of the converts and property of the Association. And under these conditions the Society shall be ruled by a President from time to time.

Members for admission will be only admitted through the Executive Board.

All letters should be written and directed to the President at the General Headquarters DistrictP.O.

REV. S. L. BLAGROVE,
President."

The one which follows next is printed in large type on pink paper:—

**"JAMAICA TRAVELLING MISSIONARY.
NOTICE!**

Parents of children why not baptise them and live happy?

The Rev. Simeon Luther Blagrove was licensed 21st December, 1899, by the Government of Jamaica to baptize adults, children and infants, everywhere.

He is Minister and Leader for The Jamaica Evangelical Independent Baptist Revival Reversionary Bond of Hope Association.

He will hold Public Service atdistrict
in the parish of
on theday of.....191....

Who will gladly baptize children at this Ser-

vice. Two qualified godparents is required for each child. One shilling will be taken as fee from each for the certificate and other expenses. Remember the date. Come early. See the authorized agent for the Society, he will give you all information.

Mr. district.....

S. L. BLAGROVE,
MINISTER."

This creature's mental equipment may best be described as a mixture of crass ignorance, combined with incredible impudence, and garnished with blasphemy. I took him myself one day in the Resident Magistrate's Court at Santa Cruz in St. Elizabeth, just as he stepped down from the witness box after giving evidence in a civil case in which he was the plaintiff, and he immediately fell in a dead faint on the floor. He was doing a roaring trade in that district at the time. The literature above quoted was found in large quantities at his house; and his "White Cross Electric Vibrator" proved to be a little toy electric battery which had evidently long been out of commission. It was still possible to turn the handle, and that was all. He spent the following eighteen months in strict seclusion, and I never heard of him again.

I have previously made mention of the fact that the Maroon Obeahmen of Accompong Town enjoy a specially high reputation; and only a few years ago I succeeded in bringing within the grasp of the law the cleverest and most cunning of these. He was a man of substance, owning a very good house, land, and stock of different kinds. He was also a pillar of the Scotch Church which I have described in the chapter

on the Maroons, and used to entertain the parson on his periodical visits there. In fact he actually brought the minister as a witness to character at his trial. He was in the habit of absenting himself from home for weeks at a time, during which he travelled on horseback—and very well mounted too—half round the island, exercising his calling. I had been for a very long time on his track before I succeeded in entrapping him. For his defence he went to the expense of bringing from Kingston to the Black River court a well known barrister, who was also a member of the Legislative Council of the island. The Court convicted him and sentenced him to nine months' hard labour. Of course he appealed to the Supreme Court, but the judgment of the lower court was upheld; so he was duly haled off to do his nine months' hard labour; many weeks having elapsed before the case was finally disposed of. Naturally it was not possible for him to indulge in such legal luxuries as described, without paying very dearly for them; and the result of the proceedings was to leave him an utterly broken man, in mind, body and estate.

The most original and interesting character that I ever encountered in the shape of an obeahman was also a native of St. Elizabeth, who resided near the place bearing the euphonious name of "Maggotty." There is both a railway station and a post office there. I had been trailing him intermittently for a couple of years; and his case is particularly noteworthy as being the only one within my long and varied experience in which I have ever had reason to suspect, in connection with Obeah, the good faith of any of my subordinates; but I am certain that in this

case there were at least two—one regular and one rural constable—in collusion with the Obeahman. Considering the hold which this superstition has on the great mass of our population, I regard the immunity to it which the police usually display as a high tribute to the discipline and the civilising influences of the force. In this case, however, I found in the house of the obeahman a letter warning him that a warrant was being issued for his arrest, a fact which was known only to myself and two of my most trusted subordinates. The letter was unsigned, but the handwriting was obviously disguised, and it bore the date of the day previous to the execution of the warrant. On the morning of the day of his trial the obeahman expressed a wish to speak to me, and I had a long confidential talk with him, in the course of which he told me that he intended to plead guilty. He said, further, that he knew that Obeah was all ignorance, but that it was a very easy way of making good money; that he had been doing it a long time and wanted to give it up, but people wouldn't leave him alone. His relatives attended the court, and without his knowledge or consent, they engaged a solicitor to defend him, but he refused to have anything to do with the latter, and when he was charged he pleaded guilty. I then recounted the facts to the court, including all that the accused had said to me, asking at the same time that he be leniently dealt with in consideration of his plea of guilty and the candour and originality of his whole conduct. He was let off with a sentence of six months.

I obtained very convincing evidence on one occasion of the high reputation borne, as I have already

indicated, by the Maroon obeahmen when I arrested the dispenser of a certain government hospital of the parish of St. Thomas, along with his wife and his mother-in-law, on the charge of stealing and disposing of numerous articles of hospital clothing, bed-linen and other equipment. The two women hailed from Kingston; and in searching the effects of the family I came across a number of letters which had passed between the man and his mother-in-law. The latter appeared to be a person of great force of character, and in her letters she was continually urging her son-in-law to go over to the Maroon settlement of Moore Town in Portland to obtain the services of one of the obeahmen there. I kept those letters for over ten years, finally consigning them to the flames when packing up for my trip to England in 1901. The case broke down, as I might have expected, for the simple reason that the District Medical Officer responsible for the management of the hospital, and thus naturally the chief witness, "ratted" in a shameless manner to save his own skin.

In the early part of this chapter I have made reference to the letters which the police often find in the course of their raids on the dwellings of workers in the black art; and in proof and illustration of my assertion and contention I will now proceed to submit a few samples of some which are still in my possession. They were found in the house of a female professor of the calling in the parish of St. Elizabeth, and it will be noted that in them there is no intimation of any criminal, or even wicked, intent implied or expressed: only a belief in the occult powers possessed by the person to whom they are addressed. But

who can say when the border-line might be over-stepped?

The lady concerned was a widow bearing the name of Susan F., and she had as partner in her business another woman whose name likewise began with F. The first letter bears no date or signature. It is written on good ruled paper from a writing pad, but I have unfortunately lost the second sheet, so it breaks off abruptly. The handwriting is very good indeed, being evidently that of an educated person, while the spelling is absolutely flawless, and the mode of expression correct, with exception of a few local idioms. The writer is a married woman, whose husband was most probably a schoolmaster. The letter discloses the fact that he did not share her superstitions, and that she must have carried on her traffic with the obeahwoman without his knowledge. It reads as follows:—

My Dear Friend,—Although I don't know you personally, I will consider you a good friend ever. I must return you many thanks for all you have done for my only child. Tongues cannot express my thanks. He has been quite a changed child since. Before I could not get him to study one lesson and his actions were like a person almost mad. Poor child, enemies have played mischief on him. His father is so anxious about him making good use of what is being spent for his future education but had he been allowed to remain I don't know what would become of the child. The last thing you sent me in the little bottle by my sister is almost finish; just a few drops left. Can you send me some more or what you

will know best as early you can? I want to send him down for the Christmas but don't know if his father will allow him. Anyhow you will hear further. I must ask you to still try your very best for me. I can't send you money in a lump but will always send to repair you as often I can. I must ask you to be on the look out for his school examination will begin this month, the 10th, before Christmas and the enemies are going to set for him there again so as to spoil his work in school. One told the child it is wasting money to send him to school for he will never learn one thing as long as he is there all the other boys will beat him off every time. I have proven your good work already so I again ask you still to do your best. Time is so hard now and things are so dull that one can't get the money as desired. However we must try.

"You will find I send you 2/6 in postal order. I hope to send you something better as Christmas I am sure to get some money. My sister wrote me that you were sick. I trust by this that you are quite better. I don't know if you were told that why I can't move as requested my husband don't believe that anyone can do another such evils. Poor man, I dare not say one word in that line to him and they have done so much for him. My little son is learning to play the piano and his poor father tried and bought one for him to play in the home and yet he would not touch it for weeks. He positively used to hate it. But one night while he was alone in the hall playing—"

The remainder is missing, as stated above, but my recollection of it is that the boy suddenly opened the instrument, entirely of his own volition, and began to play on it and to study music from that time forth. This consummation the writer of the letter attributed entirely to the agency of Mrs. Susan F.

A second letter, evidently of much older date, from Mandeville P.O., is also the handiwork of an educated woman, writing a good old-fashioned Italian script:—

“My dear Mrs. F.—I was speaking to Aunt Mary, as she must have told you, I do a lot of fancy work and have quite lost my luck in selling same. I have a lot in Port Antonio and also in Mandeville, and at home here, but can sell more. So I want you to give me luck that I may sell. Aunt Mary says that you can do it. So I have sent 2/ to my brothers asking you to do your best for me. I hope soon to see you for myself and to have a long talk with you, but in the meantime I must ask you to do your very best for me.

Trusting to hear from you soon,

Believe me yours truly,

B—— M——

P. S.—I am sending out some of my work this week to a lady who wants to buy some, but my luck is so bad that she may change her mind, so send me something by my brothers to give me luck. Trusting you will do some good for me,
Yours B— M—”

The next one comes from Cristobal, Canal Zone, and reads as follows:

'Dear Miss F.—(Miss being an abbreviation of Mrs.)—By this letter you will inform of my present condition. Madam you must forgive me for not writing you before this, but it's all cause from my condition of life. Well, from I been in the country my luck becomes very poor; whenever I get a job I can never stick to it long. If I keep at it for a month or two they laid me off and then I will be walking about seeking another for the next month or two. Now Miss Sue you will fine enclose 4/ you make take that it's very small but that's all I can manage for this time things is very bad at present and whenever I can send you a little larger amt. (amount) I will do so. Please write me and let me know as quick as possible for awaiting your reply.

Compliment to the family at home.

Yours respectfully,

A. V.

Remember I tell you the luck is very bad."

The education of the writer of this is on a lower plane than the two previous ones, but the next following are still lower in every respect:

"Mrs. F.—Please mam I will be coming up there on Sunday night as soon as ever you can even left dinner for me. For things is gone bad for the other parties say that he gain the case so I don't know what to do, so when I come up I will tell you ever thing.

I am,

Yrs.,

J. L."

This evidently refers to some proceedings in a court of law, and so also does the following, which is one of four by the same writer: a person so illiterate that his productions would be quite unintelligible to any but an expert like myself. In reproducing it I have been compelled to interpolate a good deal of translation, but the handwriting is quite legible:

"to Mrs. F.—dear mader (mother) i send this 'sanon' (even I have to give up this word) to you mam I am not able to come up there for I am hard at work but try your best for me it is not mind (mine) it is my lady (concubine) a consable (constable) bring him up and the cort (court) next week thursday (?) (Thursday or Tuesday). The 19 af November Juge Cort (Judge Court, i.e., Resident Magistrate's) but he told me come to morror (to-morrow) the 13 but i am not going please send and let me now what I am to do. Dear mader hope your will plese thank God i am well I won't see you tell (till) Christmas i send this little mite for you to buy your drink what ever to be done you must send it buy (by) the boy for me my lady send kind howdy for you my love and respect mam i am

A. V."

I will close with extracts from two epistles written by another client of this lady's who was evidently a candidate for the post of pupil teacher in a government elementary school. The handwriting and the spelling are unimpeachable, but some of the subject matter relates to the most deplorable, as it is the most salient, feature in the moral and social condition of the population of a country in which about

six and a half persons out of every ten are the offspring of illicit unions. I have throughout this book contrived to avoid dwelling on this aspect of life to any extent; but these letters throw such a lurid light on the subject that I cannot refrain from quoting them: even at the risk of offending the susceptibilities of my readers by the slight indelicacy of expression which they contain. The first extract is from a letter dated 13th May, 1916, and runs thus:—

“What my friend have given you is what I gave him to give you. It is of a little failure of money why I could not manage more, as I have to send to the Government Department the amount of five shillings so I have to shorten or divide my pocket in two parts. I beg you to accept it and as soon as I realize a next amount I shall let you have it soon.

Dear Mother Susan my trust is in you that you will pass me through the Government Examination no other year but this year, 1916, and I so again ask you for nothing but the truth that if you see you cannot manage to do so let me know before I go and fail again. I want you to do nothing but improve me with knowledge, and if not a name do not come in the Gazette for this year my name must be print there. If you can only read, I beg you take your Bible and read the 35 Psalm. Read carefully and mark the 26, 27 and 28 verses. I beg and beseech you dear mother help me that the rejected stone might become the chief in the corner. The examination will be on the 21st July coming. I will be examining in the Third Year's list of papers. The

number race horse that I am going to bet I will send it or bring it as soon as it comes.

Dear Aunt Susan, I have got two sisters in my home. One of them is found to be with child. I therefore beg your advice and assistance to know if any of my or hers enemies have not laid a plot or damage to hambug (sic) her. I beg kindly to know if you please.

I am, yours,
O. F."

The next letter forms a sequel to the foregoing in respect of the family scandal in which the writer's sister is concerned; but there is not any direct further mention of the examination. It is addressed to Mrs. Susan F. and her partner, jointly, and bears the date of 2nd June, 1916:—

"Mrs. Susan F—and Mrs. F—My dear good people, I send to tell you that since I understand about my sister we send her to the young man's home to hear his intention concerning the maintainance (this is the only error of orthography, and perhaps the commonest one in the island, the word always being pronounced thus, with accent on the second syllable) of the child and the money to pay the midwife, and several other things, but I can tell you sorrowfully that the young man simply look on her and told her that the stomach is not his. He said it is for a next man but not he, S. L. C. (giving the man's name) and if my sister come back in her (sic) yard a second time from to-day the 2nd June he will flog her properly and beside take her to

court and let her prove in court that the stomach is his or not.

Dear Mother Susan and Mrs. F., what I was to come and do for myself I had to give her to come to you both. You have tried her case by me already on Tuesday, so I sent her to you. I want you both to compel the boy to own the stomach and in three days time allow him to find himself in my yard and throw down money give the girl just like rain falling that she may get as much to pay you in a quick time and to pay the midwife because you see that all is caused through the boy and not the girl.

I am,

O. F."

The letter is written in ink; then follows this postscript in pencil:—"I beg you both to bond down the boy just at her side and fix it in such a way that he can never find it out."

Silly and misguided youth though he be, he deserves credit for the chivalrous spirit he displays by sacrificing his own interests in order to obtain redress for his erring sister.

The letters included in the above small collection go far to prove how the Obeah superstition still maintains its hold in a country which bristles with places of worship, and where a sum of over £150,000 a year is expended by the government for educational purposes among a population numbering less than one million.

My description of the details of its practice is confined to such as can be given with due regard to decency; but, as already intimated, there are sometimes horrors accompanying it which are quite un-

printable; while of late, as is also stated above, foul murder is being committed under its auspices. I am sure that all thinking men who have knowledge similar to my own of the extent to which this open sore is eating into the heart of the country must tremble for the future of Jamaica; for in the light of recent events there can be no denying that matters are steadily going from bad to worse in this respect.

Chapter XX.

THE JAMAICA POLICEMAN.

When the late W. S. Gilbert wrote in "Trial by Jury" the words:—"A policeman's life is not a happy one," he, without knowing it, really coined a proverb. And, I think, the policeman's life in Jamaica is in many respects an even less happy one than it is in many other countries; from causes which will presently be described.

I have more than once offered to write a history of the Jamaica Constabulary Force, but my offer was never accepted. It is, however, still open—for a consideration, of course. In Chapter V. I have given a short sketch of the origin and constitution of the Force, which will in 1927 have attained the respectable antiquity of sixty years, practically unscathed by the various attempts which have repeatedly been made to alter its organization and thus impair its efficiency.

As far back as the days when I was a boy Sub-Inspector there used to arise year by year an outcry from the radical politicians of the day, backed by the "Colonial Standard" newspaper, for the total abolition of the military characteristics of the Force, and its conversion into a purely civil body, armed with nothing more deadly than batons and handcuffs. There used also to be the same chatter about the spurs of the Sub-Inspectors, which seemed to have an effect on people of a certain class as irritating as

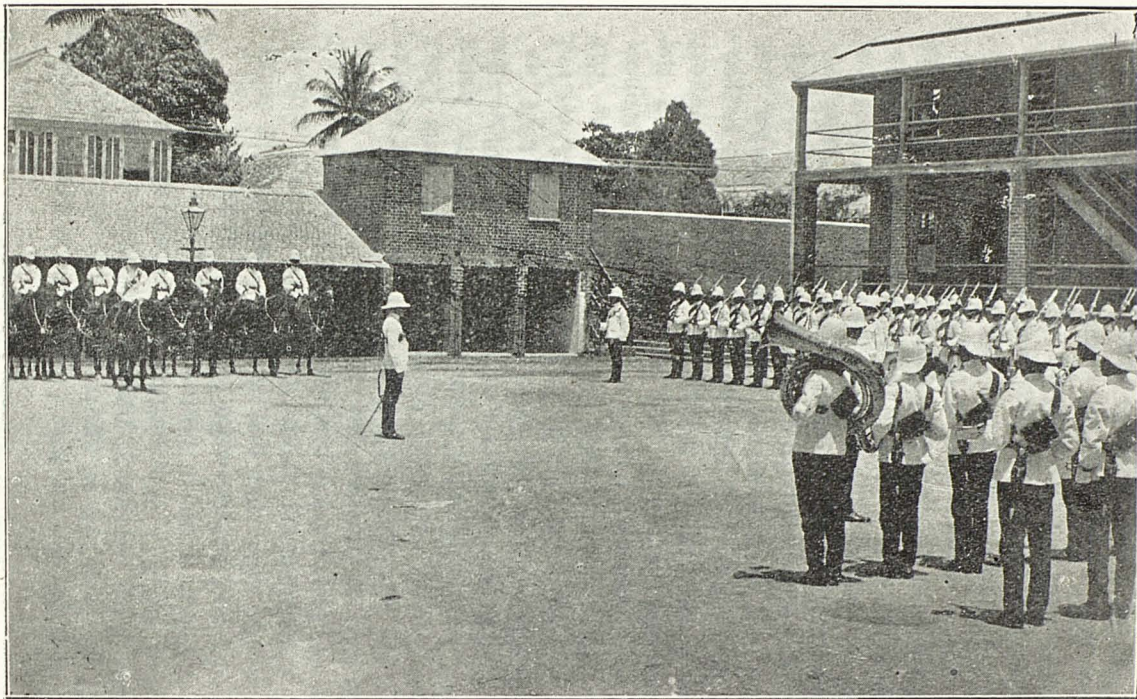


Photo by Brennan
PARADE AT SUTTON STREET WITH BAND, FOR INSPECTION BY G. O. C. TROOPS IN WEST INDIES, 1911. INSPECTOR GENERAL KERSHAW IN COMMAND.

they did on our horses. These people appear to regard the wearing of spurs as, if not altogether immoral, most certainly productive of the disease of swelled head. I can understand their objection to spurs being worn in motor cars, but in those days we rode real horses—and very good ones too.

In the year 1883 one of those periodically recurring Commissions from which this island suffers, came out here for the purpose of enquiring into things generally. (I became one of its victims, as already described in Chapter IX.). It consisted of Sir George Baden Powell, (an elder brother of the famous Chief Scout), and Colonel Crossman, the secretary being Mr. C. Alexander Harris of the Colonial Office—the gentleman who was so kind to me there in 1901, as told in Chapter XIII. (He has now, since 1923, retired from the Governorship of Newfoundland as Sir Charles Alexander Harris.) One of the many proposals brought before it was this same divesting the force of its military character; and in their report the Commission very strongly repudiated the suggestion of any such measure, as being most unwise, and a menace to the security of the country. [They also deprecated a suggestion, which some crank brought forward, to remove the red stripe from the uniform trousers, regarding that in itself as a wholesome moral influence; if I remember rightly.] Subsequent events have amply demonstrated the wisdom of the Commission's decision on that point, and since that time the idea has only occasionally flared up in the brain of some fatuous politician, like the spasmodic glimmerings of an expiring candle. I had the honour of being the first officer to cause the men of the Jamaica Constabulary to use their weapons on a riotous

mob, as told in full detail in my description of the Montego Bay disturbance; and they have repeatedly proved since then that the country can rely on their loyalty in any similar emergency. Ever since I was a boy in the service I have had the good fortune to win the devotion of my sub-officers and men; and on that terrible night in Montego Bay, although personally known only to a small proportion of the men whom I commanded, they would one and all have followed me to the gates of hell itself. Although a strict and uncompromising disciplinarian by nature, every man—including the bad characters who used to be common enough in my young days—knew that he was certain of absolute justice at my hands; and that I would never send him to do anything that I would not do myself. All this may sound like boasting, but there must be hundreds of men now alive in Jamaica who will be only too glad to bear me out.

The only time that I can recollect a deliberate attempt being made by a member of a mob to do me injury, I was saved by a man whose dismissal from the force in Kingston, as an utterly worthless character, I had procured only three weeks previously. It was in 1882 in a fight on the always disorderly race-course at Spanish Town, of which place the man was a native. My helmet had been knocked off my head, and I was standing in the midst of a crowd of roughs, holding on with one hand to the collar of a man who had struck my horse with a stick and whom I had arrested, and with the other to my horse's bridle, while sticks were flying all around me. This man was standing near by; he saw my plight, picked up my helmet and handed it to me, saying: "For God's sake, Inspec-

tor, put it on quick, sir." I let go the bridle and put on the helmet. I had barely got it on my head when a woman came up behind me and smashed it right on to my skull, with one of those pointed soda water bottles that Lover's Handy Andy called "the little bottles widout anny bottoms." The helmet undoubtedly saved me a fractured skull. (I never let go of the man, though; and his next place of sojourn was the Spanish Town hospital). There have been some instances of two generations of the same family serving under me, and in St. Elizabeth one of three. There are many men now in the Force, and retired from it, who served with me from the lowest rank up to that of sergeant and sergeant-major; and several of them have, on leaving the force, secured the means of livelihood through my influence—some even abroad. Among these I remember just now the names of Coombs, bailiff of the St. Elizabeth R. M. Court; Palmer, who occupies a similar position in Manchester; H. B. Robinson, who died as Superintendent of the Kingston Slaughterhouse; Cassells, now a cultivator in Hanover; and Foster, my office clerk in St. Elizabeth, who was through my intercession allowed to leave the force, and went to Colon, where he was enlisted, on my recommendation, in the police of the Canal Zone. He went from there to the Great War; and I was pleased and proud to receive him at Balaclava railway station in June, 1919, on his return to Jamaica, as a company sergeant-major, of whom his officers spoke very highly indeed. I last saw him as a small proprietor in the neighbourhood of Malvern in St. Elizabeth. The late Sergeant-Major W. B. Campbell also passed through the mill under my hands until he was promoted to that rank and sent to Hanover, in which

division I had first met him. He was killed by a motor truck, while on duty near Lucea a few years ago, leaving a widow and six children. I was not in charge of that parish at the time, but on going there in January, 1921, as related in Chapter XVI, I discovered that the gentleman who owned the motor truck had very generously placed in the hands of a firm of solicitors a sum of £650 for the benefit of the widow and children, eleven months previously, and that up to the time of my arrival on the scene the unfortunate woman had not seen a single penny of the money. I immediately took the matter in hand on her behalf, with the result that in less than a month there was paid to her the amount of £100, and £500 lodged in the Savings Bank for the benefit of the children by order of the Supreme Court; while the odd £50 was allotted for law costs. She and her children are enjoying the benefit of that money to this day. That is one sample of the protecting care I used to exercise over my deserving subordinates.

Then there was my dear old Sergeant Grant, my office clerk in Westmoreland, during my first sojourn there. He actually refused promotion to sergeant-major's rank because it would have taken him away from me. Nature made a true gentleman, incapable of guile, when she produced him. I do not know what has become of him, but if he has passed away, I hope he has left descendants who will read this tribute to his memory. Curiously enough, his official constabulary number (or "regimental" number as the men call it) was 1. He certainly was "number one" in heart and soul.

Another pleasant and touching memory which I

carry is that of big, burly, hefty Sergeant-Major Anthony of the water police, bidding me farewell at the gangway of the *Port Antonio* when departing on my compulsory trip in 1909, with the big tears coursing each other down his honest black face. He had been with me all through the Montego Bay riots and the subsequent troubles. He was so well known among the populace of Montego Bay, and such a favourite with them, that all they did to him during the riot was to give him a good ducking in the fountain in the middle of the square. Consequently he was able to be actively on the alert all night, and no man was more successful than he in identifying rioters and procuring evidence for our purposes. The news of his death came as a great grief to me.

There have been many acts of gallantry performed by men of the force which have passed into oblivion for want of some historical record. I will mention a couple:—The most notable which occurs to my memory—although it did not happen in my division—is that of Corporal Thompson, who had a warrant to arrest a burly negro in St. Andrew, native of another island—I forget his name. This man threatened him with a loaded shot-gun, but in spite of that Thompson walked up to arrest him with his empty hands, and received the charge full in his chest. Fortunately he survived the injury, and the cowardly ruffian was put away by a Circuit Court Judge for fourteen years, if I remember rightly.

I used always to impress upon my men that they must never allow themselves to be mauled by a prisoner, unless absolutely overpowered by sheer force or by numbers; that if they did so without using

the weapons with which they were provided, they would not only receive no sympathy from me, but would have to show good cause why they should not be punished as well. I always cautioned them to be persuasive and gentle as long as possible, but if it became clear that roughness was a necessity, then to apply it in no uncertain fashion.

My teaching bore fruit in two particular instances with men who had been with me a long time—one of them in two divisions. This was a corporal named Reid, in charge of Betheltown station in Westmoreland. An habitual criminal near Montego Bay had wounded the St. James detective who went to arrest him—armed with nothing but a supple-jack—in such cruel fashion with a cutlass as almost to sever his left hand at the wrist. He then fled to the woods on the border between St. James and Westmoreland. Corporal Reid, warned by telegram, and hearing of the man's being in his neighbourhood, took his carbine with ten rounds of ball cartridge, and, accompanied by Constable MacPherson, went in search of him. Reid came upon him in the bush still carrying his cutlass, and on his hesitating to surrender promptly disabled him with a bullet in the shoulder, arrested him, and took him to Montego Bay. At the trial in the Montego Bay Circuit Court Reid was highly commended for his action by the Chief Justice, Sir Fielding Clarke, and he received a reward from the Government as well.

In 1913, very shortly after I had handed over Westmoreland to Inspector Wright, some six or eight prisoners one fine night made their escape from the police station at Savanna-la-Mar—of which I have

given a graphic description—stole a canoe from the beach, and started on a voyage to the westward, in which direction Negril lies. The only constable at that place was a corporal named Hunter, who had been schooled by me as above described. On receiving particulars by telegram of the escape, he got a couple of district constables, commandeered two canoes from the fishermen, and, taking his carbine and ammunition, put to sea, intercepted the fugitives, and rounded them up at the muzzle of his weapon, returning every one safely to Savanna-la-Mar. For this he also was suitably rewarded. He is now a sergeant in St. Elizabeth. Of course I am unable to say whether he received detailed instructions from his officer with regard to his method of procedure, but I am quite certain that he would in any case have run the show as above described. Poor Reid had to leave the Force on account of defective eyesight, and is now dead. I do not recollect ever having had a man of mine mauled by any prisoner.

Another feat, of a different kind, but exhibiting intelligence and resourcefulness of a very high order, was performed by a corporal of mine named W. J. Henry, at Hagley Gap, a mountain station in Saint Thomas. A well known rowdy of the district one day slashed another man in the abdomen with a pruning knife, in a village about a mile from the station, inflicting a wound of such a serious nature that his entrails protruded to quite a considerable extent. When Corporal Henry reached the spot he did not worry about the assailant, who was known, and there being eye-witnesses of the assault, but turned his attention to the wounded man. The nearest doctor was

twelve miles away, over riding roads through the Blue Mountains; so Henry performed a surgical operation, with the aid of cold water, brown soap, castor oil, a darning needle, and some whitey-brown thread. He first examined the protruding intestines very carefully, and finding that they had not been injured, he washed them and the wound thoroughly with the soap, sterilized the needle by heating it in the kitchen fire, soaked the thread with the castor oil, pushed the intestines back into the abdomen, and stitched up the wound. Then he placed on it a pad of clean white calico saturated with the oil, and bandaged the abdomen with the same material. It being then too late to go to the doctor, he made the man lie down in bed on his back, instructing his wife to see that he remained in that position, and to give him nothing but condensed milk. On the following morning Henry had the man carried on a stretcher to the doctor's house. The latter did nothing more than examine the wound, provide antiseptic dressing and bandages, and send the patient home again. The corporal's surgery was not interfered with. The assailant was very soon arrested, and sent for trial at Morant Bay Circuit Court, before Sir Adam Gib Ellis, then Chief Justice. When Henry had finished his evidence Sir Adam looked at him hard for a couple of seconds, then said, in his quiet, rather cynical way:—"And you did all this on your own initiative, without having had any previous training or instruction?" Henry, who was rather a nervous man, began to fidget in the witness box, fearing that he had done something wrong. He replied:—"No, Your Honour; I have never had any instruction." After another interval of

silence, during which Henry's nervousness appeared to increase under the Judge's gaze, Sir Adam said:—"Well, your conduct has been most admirable. By your intelligence and promptitude you have in all probability saved two lives: that of the wounded man, and that of the prisoner in the dock; who, but for your action might now be on his trial for murder."

Then, turning to me, he continued:—"I presume, Mr. Inspector, that due notice has been taken of this corporal's most admirable conduct." Henry only received £5 reward though; the sum which in those days used to be regarded as the limit.

To return to feats of arms: One of the very best specimens of the hard-bitten old fighting sergeant that I ever had under me was Brooks, at Ulster Spring, away up in the mountains of Trelawny. He was not a tall man, but thick-set, as broad as he was long, and very powerful. At that time there used to be, as I have already mentioned, a very active traffic in rum smuggled from the Trelawny estates. There is a foot track leading from Clark's Town through the woods of the "Cock-pit Country" up to the Ulster Spring district, passing the celebrated Durham Cave, and joining the main road between Ulster Spring and Albert Town, which cuts off at least three-fourths of the distance by main road. It is called the Burnt Hill road. Over this track during crop time, rum used to be smuggled wholesale from the estates in the Clark's Town district, and occasionally the Ulster Spring police made a good haul. On one occasion Brooks was on patrol along the upper part of this road when he encountered a party of men and women, with donkeys, transporting a large quantity of rum. (The Trelawny

rum could always be smelt at a great distance.) Brooks did not hesitate to tackle them single-handed, whereupon they sought refuge in the kitchen of a yard by the roadside. Brooks, nothing daunted, followed them, seizing as a weapon one of those big hardwood pestles that the people use for pounding coffee and other things, which he found in the yard. The smugglers made such a determined resistance that they smashed all the vessels containing the rum, and actually burnt down the kitchen over Brooks's head; but laying out a couple of them with his pestle he managed to secure them, identify the others, and save about a teacupful of the rum, sufficient to obtain a conviction, supported by the perfume emitted by the fragments of the receptacles which had contained the rest. For—to parody a well known verse—“You may break, you may shatter the jug if you will, But the German rum flavour will cling to it still.” Gallant old Brooks retired on his pension after I left Trelawny, and is now dead, to the best of my knowledge.

I cannot help introducing another rum story in which I myself figured about the same period. Friday nights were the favourite time for the operation of the rum smugglers; and I had organized a system of night patrols from Duncan's, Clark's Town and Stewart Town stations, which covered practically all the roads in the sugar district of Upper Trelawny. One Friday night I left the hospitable roof of my friends the Casserleys at Brampton Bryan estate about 11 o'clock to return to Falmouth. It was a very dark night, and while driving at a slow pace through a wooded stretch of the road on Arcadia estate my

horses suddenly shied very badly at some object at one side of it, and my nostrils were assailed at the same moment by the overwhelming odour of new rum. Pulling up and getting out to examine the object, I found it to be a four-gallon demijohn full of rum fresh from the still. There being no person in sight I made my servant take it up and place it in the back of my buggy. Scarcely had he done so when a stout black man, evidently slightly intoxicated, and carrying a cutlass, emerged from the bush at the roadside into the full glare of my lamps, and looking up and down the road, began to ask with terrible oaths, who had taken his demijohn. I then informed him that I had done so, and that it was now my intention to take him also. (I was in plain clothes.) At the same time I jumped down from the buggy again, told him who I was, and collared him. He at once put up a fight, but in accordance with my principles already quoted, I lost no time in persuading him with the oak sapling that I always used to carry, tied him up like a hog with my horses' ropes, and lifted him into the back of the buggy, with the help of my servant. (That cudgel, the inseparable companion of all my journeyings, was a perfect implement of its kind, and a much prized gift from a dear friend in the R.G.A. It was the only weapon I carried in the Montego Bay riot, and was there struck out of my hand and forever lost.) I made my servant, sitting beside me, lean out through the back window of the buggy, and keep a firm grip on the ropes binding my prisoner, while I drove on to Duncan's station, and greatly surprised the sergeant in charge by delivering him there after midnight, giving strict injunctions to forward him to

Falmouth in time for the court on the following day. The rum I took with me. My man duly turned up by 10 o'clock on the Saturday, very sore in mind and body, pleaded guilty, and was sentenced to several months' imprisonment—this rather less than twelve hours after his encounter with me. The R.M., Mr. C. M. Calder, in passing sentence remarked that it was a striking example of "*bis dat qui cito dat.*" (He gives twice who gives quickly.) During the remainder of that crop my patrols did not succeed in making a single case of unlawful possession of rum; and on my asking the sergeant at Duncan's, who was always in charge of the patrols, for some explanation of it, he said:—"Well sir, the people are all so frightened by what happened to the man you took at Arcadia the other night that they seem afraid even to walk on the road on Friday nights. We scarcely ever see anybody after dark. It is the talk of the whole district." Which was a most satisfactory result.

When one considers all the circumstances under which recruits are obtained for the Jamaica Constabulary, I think every intelligent man with an open and unprejudiced mind must admit that the force makes a very creditable showing. In the first place, it must be admitted that the average intelligence of the class from which the majority of the candidates are drawn is not of the highest order. A raw and rustic youth between the ages of 18 and 25 years is taken from a rural district in which he has probably up to that period been exclusively engaged in agricultural pursuits, and knows nothing of town life; trained at the depot for ten or twelve months, according to his intelligence, and then turned loose, invested by the law and with a

good deal of authority over the fellow-citizens with whom he has hitherto been merely on a footing of equality—or perhaps even of subordination. Is it then a thing to be wondered at that he should sometimes exhibit symptoms of swelled head? Again: his physical standard is a high one—no man being taken on whose height is under five feet eight inches; he wears a smart and becoming uniform, and often presents an imposing figure in the streets. That renders him liable to the wiles of the “eternal feminine”—particularly in a country where there are practically no moral restrictions—and the women of his class cluster about him like flies round a sugar barrel. This gives ground for the remark which it has so often hurt me to hear:—“There is another of those damned policemen talking to a woman as usual.” The two most dangerous pitfalls lying across his path are those which I have indicated: swelled head and women. His physical standard is a high one, and he should endeavour, as far as in his power lies, to raise his moral standard to the same level. There is a good old copybook maxim which reads:—“Avoid the very appearance of evil;” and if he follows that, and cultivates a civil and courteous demeanour towards everybody—saying “sir” to a gentleman and “ma’am” to a lady—he will go far towards breaking down the prejudice which undoubtedly does exist against him among the upper classes. He knows a gentleman or a lady when he meets one as well as anybody else. Civility costs nothing, and it goes far. It is the lack of it which makes the people of the more opulent classes resent being “ordered about by damned niggers,” and those of the lower orders speak of the police as “dog-

drivers"—which used to be the favourite term of opprobrium in my young days.

In dealing with anyone whom he arrests on a criminal charge he should remember that the moment a man becomes a prisoner that man is, so to speak, wrapped in cotton wool and put under a glass case, and that if he attempts to crack the glass—let alone interfering with the wrapping—there are occupants of the judicial bench who will not hesitate to hold him up to the obloquy and ridicule of a crowded court. Another difficulty that the Jamaica policeman has to contend with is that he does not get the same assistance from the members of the public in general that the English policeman does. Perhaps there are faults on both sides; and it may be that this attitude on the part of the citizen is due to the failings which I have indicated above: although there cannot be any question but that the consideration of colour has something to do with it. But I am quite confident that strict attention to the maxims which I am endeavouring to inculcate will surely—if slowly—improve that attitude. Already I notice a distinct advance in that direction in the manner in which drivers of vehicles obey the signals given by the constables at the principal centres of traffic. Being constantly on the move about the city and suburbs as I am, and always on the alert to be of use to the police in case of any trouble, I cannot help being most favourably impressed by the conditions now prevailing in that respect.

But there is always at hand a mind of a certain type which regards a policeman as fair game for a gibe in the press. This type found forcible expression

in the following utterance by some reporter in the *Gleaner* of the 30th September, 1926:—

"The Traditions of the Force."

"One incident described in the course of the evidence, caused a ripple of mirth to pass over the room. Referring to a minor incident, one of the witnesses being asked if anyone was present when it occurred, replied, 'yes, a policeman was there.'

"This caused a smile all round, for it was felt that for a policeman to be actually on the scene when anything was happening was quite against the best traditions of the Force—in fact might almost be regarded as a grave breach of discipline."

Now, I have no doubt whatever that the person who penned that thought himself brilliantly clever; but the only way fittingly to describe his effusion is by calling it a sneer, as cheap and silly as it is undeserved and untrue, and as impolitic and unwise as it is any of the above. It cannot tend towards strengthening the hands of the police to see themselves thus scoffed at in the columns of the one daily paper of the island. Most likely the literary genius whose mind evolved this scathing satire would be among the very first to run yelling to the despised police for protection on the appearance of any symptoms of a race riot. He knows that he would be on safe ground there, at any rate.

What I entirely fail to understand is the attitude of a certain class of our people in looking down upon any member of their family who may choose the Ja-

maica Constabulary as a means of livelihood. I have known of some cases myself, and have been told of others even worse. I do not mean the tillers of the soil, the "hewers of wood and drawers of water," but those of a higher class. To begin with, the Jamaica policeman is better paid, from the very outset, than any other man of his class in this country—and in many others for that matter. Then by steadiness and good conduct, provided he possesses the necessary education, he may rise to a rank which will ultimately give him a pension on which he will be able to live for the rest of his life; even if he could not supplement it by the employment which is always within the reach of ex-members of the force bearing good characters. Employers of labour are only too glad to get such men. So much for the force in general; but I now propose to have a little heart-to-heart talk with the sergeant-majors and sergeants, to whom I intend to address direct—using the second person—the fatherly advice which I have given verbally to more than one of my own trusted men who have felt—and quite rightly—that I was the very best friend for them to consult. If I were to fail to make some pronouncement in this book on the vexed question of promoting the native sub-officers to commissions, I feel sure that I should be regarded as shirking an obvious duty; and in all my long life no man except the "Honourable" Hugh Clarke, has ever dared to insinuate that I am capable of such malfeasance.

The idea is of course based on the utterly fallacious theory that all men are born equal: which, as any fool can see, they are not. It is nothing new. Even in the days of that Commission which I have

described above, the subject was broached, and their report was, in effect, as follows:—"We regard it as essential that the officers of the force should be drawn from such a class as to be capable of mingling on terms of social equality with the highest dignitaries of their respective districts, and, indeed, of the whole island." Quoting from memory after all these years I cannot be certain of the exact words, but I am in no doubt whatever as to the gist and purport of the finding on that point.

Now to the sub-officers indicated above I would say as follows:—You one and all know quite well that no man has your best interests more at heart, or is more jealous of the standing and reputation of the force than myself. Therefore, if I should say anything that does not altogether please you, you cannot doubt that I do so from the purest motives, and because I think that perfectly plain speaking will lead by the shortest and most direct road to a complete understanding. You are all men of mature years, and some of you have already arrived at middle age, with settled ideas and habits. Society is constituted in a certain fashion to-day, and not one of you will ever live long enough to see any marked change in it; no matter what the far distant future may have in store. That is a very important consideration for you to bear in mind, quite apart from your fitness for commissions by reason of efficiency in your police duties. If you were promoted, it would be necessary for you to cut yourselves loose from those persons who are now your associates, and you would find yourselves boycotted by the upper classes of society—hovering, from a social point of view, between heaven and

earth, like Mahomet's coffin. Do you think the Custos and the Resident Magistrate would invite you to tea? And if by any chance they did so, how would you feel in their drawing-rooms? A fish out of water would be in Paradise in comparison. Having passed through the mill of years, and attained your present rank in the Jamaica Constabulary, you are fit to take your places alongside of the non-commissioned officers of any police force in the world. Therefore my advice to you is to be content with that, and not to aspire to a false position, which you would find to contain for you nothing but unhappiness, if not downright misery. That is all from the social angle. Now, listen to my arguments from the official point of view. (I am, of course, taking it for granted that there are none among you who have been contaminated by the teachings of the U.N.I.A.) :—

The men like their officers to be white—or “pass as such,” to use the expression coined by the late member for Portland, (“late” in two senses). He could no more keep this phrase out of his annual speech on the Constabulary vote than Dickens's Mr. Dick could keep King Charles's head out of his memorials. And you like it also, if you will be honest with yourselves; and you know perfectly well that if you were promoted to commissions there would be endless trouble about the saluting—not to mention anything else—especially those whose complexions are of darker hue. You are all ready to salute a white officer instinctively. I used to be greatly amused when I got my first Irish sergeant-major to see the men's hands fly up to their caps whenever they went to speak to him, although he was of course not en-

titled to a salute. It took them some time to get over the habit. There is another danger. Among your people—as among all primitive peoples—a favourite form of abuse is what is called in Jamaica “tracing”; that is making uncomplimentary allusions to one’s ancestry and antecedents. When I was a boy Sub-Inspector, and violent and disorderly characters were not uncommon in the force, one of those whom I was handling one day told me that they (the constables) had no means of knowing who had been in the Reformatory in England! He was “tracing” me. Just think of what might happen to any of yourselves in similar circumstances! I will illustrate my meaning by one of my pertinent stories:—Once at the Bethel-town court in Westmoreland, I was discussing this very question with two friends of mine, both members of the legal profession. One of them, G., from Montego Bay, was a man of exceedingly dark complexion, as near black as could be, although his hair was fine in texture, and only slightly curly. (I am sure he must have been a descendant of one of the “Indian Shot” whom I have mentioned in the chapter on the Maroons. I used to know an uncle of his who bore exactly similar physical characteristics. Both men are long since dead.) G.’s standing in his profession, and in society, is best attested by the fact that, dark though he was, he was solicitor for practically all the white families in St. James. The other was T., a man of clear brown complexion, and a comparatively recent arrival in the parish. He used about that time to profess opinions of a radical type, but these, I am pleased to note, he has very greatly modified in the course of years. He remarked that he could

not see why officers' commissions should not be given to deserving black and coloured sergeant-majors of the force, and asked me whether I could give a reason; whereupon I put it to him thus:—"Putting aside the social aspect of the question, T., there is a very good reason from the point of view of discipline, which I am sure you will admit to be the backbone of the force. The men would give endless trouble about saluting one of their own colour, and more especially would the difficulty arise with men of light complexion and dark or black officers. Of course if there is to be any such promotion at all, no colour line can possibly be drawn among those who are promoted. That would be creating a far more invidious distinction. They would also resent being punished by such officers; and it would very probably happen that a man with a violent temper, and perhaps inflamed by drink, would give expression to his resentment in most insubordinate language, winding up somewhat in this fashion:—"but who is you any at all? No the same damn naygur like myself?" And he would have the secret sympathy of all the other men who might happen to be present. The discipline of the force would very soon go to hell." Then, turning to G. I continued: "What do you say, G., am I right or wrong?"

"Thomas. you are perfectly right; you have hit the nail on the head."

"Oh, I see," then remarked T. nodding his head slowly up and down. "I never looked at it in that light before. I never thought of that."

"No," I said; "neither do any of the other people who are always gassing about it."

G. knew that I was right; so do all of you to

whom these remarks are addressed; and so does every intelligent man who knows his country, no matter what his colour may be. It may be an unpleasant truth, but there can be no doubt that it is a truth. No: do not allow noisy demagogues or blatant politicians to undermine your loyalty with specious arguments in this direction. Having attained as high and respected a position as you are fitted by Nature, education and training to fill, be content to continue serving your country in that position with the loyalty and efficiency which have raised you to it, instead of aspiring to become square men in round holes.

Notwithstanding the sneers of irresponsible newspaper scribblers, your country is proud of you, and confident of your faith and loyalty. Be content, then, to continue to deserve that pride and confidence. That is the advice which, out of the wealth of his knowledge and experience, your best friend gives you: a friend who has lived in honourable and pleasant fellowship with you and your predecessors for very nearly half a century.

There are also two or three minor matters with regard to which I would warn you all to "watch your step," as the Americans say. You don't know who may be looking on with an eye as observant as my own, and taking note of your conduct and bearing; therefore always carry yourselves in the street as if all eyes were upon you. If two or more of you are walking together, for goodness sake walk in step, and don't shamle along anyhow, like undrilled men. Don't keep your smartness only for parade purposes.

I expect to be called a hide-bound old fossil: but if there is one thing that irritates me more than another it is to see a constable in the street with a cigar

or cigarette in his mouth, especially if he has his cap at the back of his head. Smoking in public while in uniform was never permitted until 1899, and I thought it then a great mistake to allow it. I think so still. I used to be a hard smoker myself up to a few years ago, but no man ever saw me smoking in uniform in public. Nothing will ever reconcile me to it.

Whenever a new man joined my division, one of the first questions I always put to him was whether he was a smoker. If he answered in the affirmative I used to say: "Very well: you have a perfectly legal right to smoke in public; but it is not always wise to do everything that you are permitted to do, for you may stand a chance of getting yourself disliked; so if you want to be happy and get on in my division you will do well not to let me see you smoking in the streets of the town in the day-time. At night or along a country road, I don't mind." And I do not recollect that any man ever disregarded my advice.

In conclusion I have to thank the sub-officers and men for the assistance they have rendered me towards the publication of this book.



Photo by Brennan

**GUARD FALLEN IN, SUTTON STREET NORTH VERANDAH, WITH INSPECTOR WEDDERBURN
AND S. M. WAITE.**

Chapter XXI.

THE RACE QUESTION.

Some cursory allusion to this matter has already been made in Chapter IV., but on reflection I have come to the conclusion that some further plain speaking will produce a salutary effect. I fully realize that the subject is a delicate and difficult one; but my confidence with regard to the position which I have achieved in the esteem of my black fellow-countrymen is such that I feel certain of my ability to deal with it in a manner which will win the approval and appreciation of the best element among them.

After having resided in the country districts for the best part of four decades, nothing has shocked and amazed me more than to find how race hatred has developed and spread among a certain section of the black population in and about Kingston. In chapter IV. I have attributed that to the activities of the Universal Negro Improvement Association. To these good people I would now say that the way to give to their race a real uplift, morally, intellectually and socially, is not by endeavouring to poison their minds against the white and coloured inhabitants of the island. That can only lead along a downward path, through "envy, hatred, malice and all uncharitableness"; ending ultimately in violence and bloodshed. Physical force is the *ultima ratio regum*—the last argument of kings—and it will not require much reflection to convince any black man of intelligence who will have the upper hand when

it comes to that extremity. I would suggest to them that the first step they should take towards the "improvement" of the "universal negro" is to improve his manners: to induce him to exchange that aspect of studied insolence towards persons having skins of fairer tint, which he now appears to cultivate, for a pleasant and courteous demeanour towards all men. Further: I emphatically denounce as a malignant falsehood the doctrine that in the Civil Service of this colony there is any differentiation caused by reason of colour. One has only to enter and look around the various public offices for the refutation of that.

When I entered the service fifty years ago a dark face in a public office used to attract immediate attention by reason of its rarity; while an out-and-out black one was as unknown as a skirt. To-day, as everybody knows, the conditions are just the reverse; save in one or two exceptional instances. That is a radical change which I have myself been witness of. Well might a liberal and enlightened government proudly say with the Roman of old, pointing to these tokens of its good faith:—"*Si monumentum quaeris, circumspice*" (which, freely translated for the benefit of those to whom this chapter is specially dedicated, means: "if you are searching for a monument, just look about you.")

I have been horrified at being told, on unquestionable authority, of black men in the streets of Kingston—and sometimes in the broad light of day—endeavouring to foment race hatred by haranguing gatherings of other ignorant negroes, advising them to "push these foreigners into the sea," to "drive these foreigners out of the country." By "foreigners" they meant Englishmen, if you please! One of these orators went

so far, on a recent occasion, as actually to advise his hearers to "cut the throats of every white and coloured man in the island, then we black Jamaicans will be supreme." Those last words alone furnish some measure of the unfathomable ignorance of this self-constituted leader of his race. I myself once, riding on a tram car, called the attention of the conductor to the disgracefully filthy condition of a black man whom I found occupying a front seat opposite to me. This man scowled at me, but, deterred perhaps by the very truculent aspect which I can assume at will, did not say much until he was leaving the car at Cross Roads, when he told me just to wait "until the black man gets on top." Incidents of this description were unheard of in the days of my youth. Now, I should first like to ask all people of the class which I am endeavouring to describe, especially those possessing any intelligence—as many of them undoubtedly do—whom they have to thank for the blessings of civilization, and individual freedom surpassing that of any other realm in the world? And, further—vile ingrates that they are!—who was it that guarded these waters during the Great War, and enabled little Jamaica to lead a more peaceful and sheltered existence than almost any other corner of the Empire, if it was not the British Navy?

It seems almost a pity that some of these gentry were in this manner saved from getting just one little taste of German rule. I can assure them that the mere suspicion of having used such language as I have quoted above would have speedily resulted in the speaker dangling at the end of a rope from the nearest lamp post.

There is a certain type of black man, who, while

having sufficient intelligence to realise that Nature has fixed a great gulf between himself and the white race, instead of trying to bridge that gulf in the right way, bitterly resents the existence of it, and gives vent to his resentment in blind hatred of the white; utterly ignoring the incalculable benefits which he derives from the latter. I generally have at command a pertinent story to illustrate my points, and the following exactly fits into this situation:—

Some forty years ago I was riding one morning through a rural settlement at the eastern end of the island, in plain clothes, when I came upon a group of honest country people, on the way to their provision grounds, who were gathered about a small two-wheeled vehicle drawn up by the roadside, the occupant of which was distributing advertisements of some patent medicine. He was a very well dressed and well groomed black man, evidently on very good terms with himself; and he caught sight of me as I pulled up my horse a few yards away. His demeanour towards the rustics was distinctly haughty. Thereupon he immediately began to talk, not *to* me, but *at* me, using language expressive of his contempt for the white race. He did not know who I was, and his words were intended for the edification of his hearers, some of whom soon began to recognize me as he spoke. I endured his obloquy for a couple of minutes, until, as he appeared to be gaining encouragement by my silence, I thought it was time to read him a lesson. Riding close up to his little cart, I addressed him thus:—

“Look here, my friend, evidently you don’t think much of a white man; but just do me the favour to answer a few questions, will you?”

“Yes, certainly; go on.”

"That's a very nice felt hat you have on: will you kindly tell me who made it; white man, or black?"

"Oh! well, white man, yes."

"You are wearing a nice smooth white collar, a fine necktie, and a handsome tie-pin: may I ask whose handiwork they are—white man's, or black?"

He now commenced to show signs of discomfort and did not answer this question, but looked round at the country people, who were beginning to snigger. I therefore continued my catechism, but dropped into the vernacular at the end of each sentence, to the great delight of my listeners, who presently shrieked with laughter every time I ceased speaking to await a reply. The black gentleman commenced to show symptoms of a desire to leave the spot, but I rode my horse right across the front of his, and, warming up to my work, and stimulated by the applause of my audience, I continued:—"You have a very fine gold chain there, and a watch attached to it; who mek it; buckra, else naygur? Your mouth is filled with gold, put there by a dentist. The dentist may have been a black man like yourself, but who mek dentis': buckra, else naygur? You have a very good suit of tweed clothes on, but who mek de cloth: buckra, else naygur?" And so I continued, in the same strain, while the gentleman was completely struck dumb; and the country people, whose number was gradually increasing, simply rocked with laughter. Someone appeared to have told him who was talking to him, and he was very duly and properly impressed by the knowledge of my identity. All his "side" evaporated.

After finishing with his clothing I conducted him to his house; where I assumed he had at least three apartments—drawing, dining and bedrooms. I went

through them all, enumerating every article I could call to mind of furniture, glass ware, cutlery and other conveniences of civilisation; while in the bedroom I mentioned everything pertaining to the toilet, not even omitting such articles of crockery-ware as are put to the basest uses. I then took him to the railway, the street cars, the electric light, the post office, the telegraph office, the steamers at the wharves, and to every other appliance of civilization that I could remember, until my memory was exhausted; asking, after naming each one:—"Who mek it; naygur, else buckra?" (There were neither motor cars, moving pictures, aeroplanes, nor gramophones in those days, or I should have taken him on a still longer excursion.) Having reduced him to a mass of perspiring pulp, I administered the final blow thus:—"Yes, you impudent and ungrateful nigger, of all the things you wear and use in your daily life, every single one was made or invented by the white race—unless you have some Obeah charm that I can't see hanging round your neck, under your merino. You are living on the white man's money now, by distributing those very papers that I see you with. Instead of going about the country abusing them, as you appear to be doing, you ought to go down on your knees and thank your God every night that your ancestors were brought to Jamaica as slaves. But for that, instead of driving about well dressed, in a free and civilized country, on good roads, with a good horse and trap, you might have been a naked cannibal, hiding in some African jungle to save your skin from some other naked cannibal waiting to kill and eat you, or make a slave of you."

With this peroration I allowed him to pass; and

as he drove off amid the derisive laughter of my honest country folk, I heard the following expression from more than one of the women:—"Lard! missis, Inspector mash up de man fe true."

The man in this case belonged to the lower orders; but I came across one of the same type in London, in a much higher social position, being in practice there as a medical man. He was not black, but of the shade of colour known in Jamaica as "sambo." A Jamaican by birth, he had been sent to England as a youth to study medicine; and he had found the amenities of London, centre of the world's civilization, so much to his taste, that he never returned to his native land. No: London was good enough for him; and he appears to have repaid the hospitality with which he was treated by the white race by abusing and vilifying them whenever opportunity offered. He even went so far as once to publish a book called "The Uncoloured Races." It must have fallen still-born from the press, for I do not recollect ever hearing of it except in a brief review that I came across once in some paper, whose name I have forgotten, in the course of my omnivorous reading. From this review I gathered that the essence of the book was an expression of his aversion and contempt towards all mankind possessing skins of fair colour. He hailed, I think, from the parish of St. Ann, and he was a man of truly superb physique. I saw him twice: the first time in the entrance hall of the House of Commons in August 1901, when I knew nothing about him; and the second time in circumstances which I shall now describe. I learnt a good deal about him later. I have already mentioned the lecture on Jamaica which I gave at the Society of Arts in London on the 5th February, 1902

with Mr. W. F. Lawrence, M.P., in the chair. It was while Mr. Lawrence was making his opening remarks introducing me to the audience that I saw the man enter the hall and take a seat, recognising him at once by his magnificent proportions. It was a raw night, and his imposing presence was further enhanced by a fur-lined overcoat with a heavy collar. In company with him were a little English parson and his wife, whom I at once—and as I afterwards discovered correctly—diagnosed as belonging to a certain religious denomination which I have always held to be largely responsible for the dissemination of racial antipathy. They sat one on each side of him and were evidently pleased and proud to have him under their wing.

I duly read my paper on Jamaica, and exhibited my limelight views. In the course of the paper occurred the following remarks:—

“As some information regarding the social condition of Jamaica may not be without interest I will conclude this paper with some remarks on the subject. We have not, as is the case in the United States of America, any race or colour “problem” to solve. The white people of the island constitute, roughly speaking, the “classes”; but on the same footing as these and mingling with them on terms of perfect equality, are numbers of well-to-do coloured people, of various shades of complexion, well-educated, cultured, and travelled; many of them occupying high positions in the public service, and practising as lawyers, and doctors, and holding office in the Church. An official social function at Government House, for instance, is a very motley affair as

far as complexions go, but all the guests are on terms of perfect equality.

“The negroes, who constitute the bulk of the population, and are the labouring classes, are contented and happy. They are as proud of being British subjects as any of their white countrymen; and nature is bountiful to them in the way of supplying their simple wants. I do not propose to enter into any dissertation on their faults and vices, but it should be remembered that it is only a little more than 60 years since they began to enjoy to the full the blessings of civilisation; therefore it is unfair to judge them by European standards. It seems reasonable to infer that the virtues which distinguish northern races have been engendered and fostered by rigours of climate and the struggle for existence. Stimuli of this description are lacking in the regions where it is “always afternoon,” and therefore the moral standard is necessarily a lower one. But this much I can say about the Jamaica negro: that he is extremely temperate in the matter of drink, and comparatively free from serious crime. Those horrifying cases of wife-beating that figure so constantly in English criminal records never disgrace ours. Our black fellow-subjects are good-natured, and not in the least vindictive: they want principally to be let alone. Occasional thinly-veiled attempts are now and then made by some of the better-educated among them—men who owe everything they know to the white man’s kindness—to stir up race hatred and to persuade them that they are oppressed and

downtrodden; but the negro, simple as he seems, has a good deal of sound common sense, and is a very shrewd judge of human nature, so that these attempts at agitation invariably meet with the fate they deserve."

(Incidentally, I do not think that all my words, with reference to the negroes are quite as applicable to-day as they were at that date, twenty-five years ago.)

At the close of my paper a discussion arose on some of the points contained in it. In this Sir Edward Noel Walker, K.C.M.G., formerly Colonial Secretary for Jamaica, and Colonel W. G. Dawkins, a large landed proprietor in Clarendon—both old and good friends of mine—and other gentlemen took part, dwelling chiefly on the economic side of the question; but when they had said what they had to say, the man whom I am describing rose to the full height of his commanding figure, and the following then took place, as recorded in the *Journal of The Society of Arts*:—

"Dr. T. E. S. Scholes said that he did not quite agree with Mr. Thomas's description of the contentment and complete satisfaction of the natives. In an article in that day's *Times*, it was announced that a deficit of £4,530 was anticipated next year in the revenue of Jamaica, and the article concluded with the significant words: 'There is widespread poverty, and the business outlook still remains gloomy.' The class of the population upon whom the pressure of that poverty rested most heavily was the peasantry, so that a false impression was likely to be produced

when the natives were described as thoroughly contented. He was afraid that there was an increasing tendency on the part of people in this country, and of the white races generally, to regard the coloured races as simply recipients. As a coloured man himself he felt that he was not in that position. While he received from the British, the British also received from him. They were working hand in hand. The coloured people certainly bore the burden of taxation, and, because they did so, they had a right to demand certain things, and if those things were not forthcoming, they were entitled to make a protest without being regarded as seditious. He thought it was important that the ruling race should bear that point in view, as it was often forgotten. Undoubtedly he would be told that the cultivation of sugar conferred a great benefit upon the West Indians by the circulation of money occasioned thereby. That was correct, but it did not cover the whole ground, because sugar enjoyed no immunity from taxation and, as the peasantry bore the taxation they assisted in bearing the burden of the sugar planting industry. As a loyal British subject, he contended that it was only when the interests of all classes of the Empire were taken into consideration and when every man, judged only by his ability, and character was given every chance, that the stability of the British Empire would be thoroughly assured."

(How the times have changed! Fancy anybody making a fuss about a deficit of £4,530! Why, in these

days a deficit of such dimensions would have a very narrow escape of being regarded as a surplus!)

"Mr. Thomas, in reply to Dr. Scholes, repeated the statement he had made in the paper that occasionally attempts were made to stir up ill-feeling, but that those attempts always met with the fate they deserved, because their black fellow subjects had too much good sense."

I did not then understand, and I have never since succeeded in understanding, what the gentleman desired to convey by his cryptic, incoherent, disingenuous and plausible utterances. To my mind they appeared nothing more or less than one of those "thinly-veiled attempts to stir up race hatred and persuade them (the negroes) that they are oppressed and down-trodden," to which reference was made in my paper. It is true that "Mr. Thomas in reply repeated the statement he had made in his paper;" but what was in Mr. Thomas's heart he could not allow to pass his lips, for fear of disturbing the harmony of the evening, which was this:—"You, sir, afford in your own person a typical example of the kind of man whom I described. Here you have sat, year after year in England, in the heart of the white man's civilization, living in the enjoyment of his hospitality and his comforts, of your own choice expatriated from your native land, and even able to afford the luxury of a fur-lined great-coat; yet this evening from this London lecture-hall you are trying to persuade your less fortunate countrymen, the negroes of Jamaica, that they are being unfairly treated by the ruling race."

Later in the night, while discussing this episode at supper at the National Liberal Club with Mr. Law-

rence, Sir Edward Walker and Colonel Dawkins, I elicited the warm approval of these gentlemen by delivering myself in the words quoted above.

This man is the worst example of unreasoning race hatred that I have ever come into contact with. By a remarkable coincidence the very same number of *The Journal of the Society of Arts* which reports these proceedings, contains the following:—

“OBITUARY.

“Sir Conrad Reeves.—The Hon. Sir William Conrad Reeves, Chief Justice of Barbados, whose death took place on the 8th January last, was elected a member of the Society of Arts in 1897. He was born at Barbados in 1838, the son of Thomas Phillips Reeves, a medical practitioner, and he began life in a printing office, afterwards becoming a reporter. His ability was so marked that his friends sent him to England to read for the Bar. After he had been called by the Middle Temple he returned to his native island and soon acquired a considerable practice as an advocate. In 1873 he was elected to the House of Assembly, and in 1876 he was appointed Solicitor-General. In 1881 he became Attorney General, and in 1886 he was advanced to the Chief Justiceship. The Hon. Sir John Worrall Carrington, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Hong Kong, in a letter to the *Times*, described Sir Conrad Reeves as “the most distinguished man of colour ever born in the British dominions.” On his death the Governor, with the consent of the members of the local legislature, accorded him the honour of a public funeral.”

Now, the subject of this obituary notice was a man, I am informed, of complexion very little—if any—lighter than this truculent doctor; and all these honours and distinctions, culminating in a knighthood, had been conferred upon him in a West Indian island where colour prejudice is far stronger, and its attendant line of social demarcation far more rigid, than in Jamaica.

Sir Conrad Reeves was one of those dark-complexioned men who, being gentlemen “by the grace of God,” by means of sheer natural ability, tact, and persistence, succeed in bridging the gulf to which reference is made at the beginning of this chapter. What a contrast to the worthy doctor! Fortunately for Jamaica we do not suffer from any dearth of men of the Reeves type, to form a bulwark against race hatred. Several names occur to me, as they will to all my intelligent readers who know their country as I do. I think, among many others, of men like the Hon. Hector Josephs, the Hon. the Reverend A. A. Barclay, Dr. D. J. Phillips, the Rev. F. W. Coore, the heads of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Rev. C. A. Wilson. The last-named of these has penned in his “Men With Backbone” a fearless, honest and scathing criticism and denunciation of the faults and failings of his countrymen such as few men would have dared to attempt. And I regard it as a distinctly healthy sign that the book was so highly appreciated as to render a second edition necessary.

Before closing this chapter I would ask those blind leaders of the blind who strive to foment race antipathy by such utterances as are quoted in the early part of it a few questions:—

Are they aware of the dangers which are attendant on playing with fire?

Do they realise the depth of black ignorance that prevails among the lowest stratum of the populace which listens to their inflammatory speeches?

Have they forgotten the fathomless nature of this abyss of darkness which was revealed only about a year ago, when a thousand of such persons gathered in the lower part of Kingston to witness the arrival of a woman who they had been told had been transformed into a mule, and was about to be deposited in the Museum of the Institute of Jamaica; and how it became necessary in consequence to close the gates of the Institute and invoke the protection of the Police?

Do these demagogues not know that, should they by any chance succeed in having their poisonous doctrines translated into action by such persons, the powers that be have at hand a swift and certain remedy for the disease?

As I have intimated elsewhere, the pity of it is that such a consummation would find the most blatant of them secure in their own homes, saving their own skins "when the guns begin to shoot," and leaving their hapless dupes to suffer the penalty of their nefarious teachings. No: it has hitherto been a source of pride to us, and of wonder and admiration to our rapidly increasing number of visitors from overseas—notably those from the United States—that in Jamaica we have no "race problem." It would, however, appear to be the desire of the U.N.I.A. to sully the fair fame of this island by creating one; but this desire the dominating good sense of our people is

certain in the end to frustrate, under the guidance of such men as I have named above, and of many others of the same type whom space will not allow me to enumerate.

It occurs to me, before finally quitting this subject, to refer to the existence in former years of what used to be a very distinct element in the social life of the island, but which seems to me now to have disappeared, and that may best be described as a coloured aristocracy. The memories of youthful days bring back to me the figures of eight or ten men of varying shades of complexion—some of them very dark—who were prominent in the society of their day. Almost to a man they were of fine physique, portly and dignified presence, and polished manners, ready and witty of speech, and classical scholars. They were large landed proprietors, planters, penkeepers, breeders of race horses, and as such necessarily sportsmen of fine calibre; racing being in those days a sport in every sense of the word—not the financial enterprise to which it has since degenerated. Some of them were also members of the learned professions; and all had good libraries in their homes, where, being *bons vivants*, one of their chief pleasures was to dispense the true old Jamaica hospitality—nowadays also a thing of the past—accompanied by “feast of reason and flow of soul.” And have we not here in Kingston a statue reared to one of them (deceased before my day) who is the only Jamaican that was ever entitled to write the letters “C.B.” after his name? They have all now passed over to the Great Beyond; but to me, who as a youngster was always *persona grata* with them they remain a very pleasant and vivid memory; particularly delightful being the recollection of a daugh-

ter of one of those gentlemen who was the finest songstress that ever opened her lips on a Jamaica platform.

Before closing this chapter I think I ought to say, as a matter of simple justice to my negro fellow countrymen, that in the course of my daily travelling about in the street cars, I have repeatedly witnessed with great pleasure acts of courtesy paid by black men on these cars to ladies of fair complexion. Truth compels me however also to say—and I do so with deep regret—that such courtesy has not in every case been acknowledged by the fair recipient in the manner which it deserved. Similar courtesies are also frequently extended to myself; but I think I need hardly say that I never neglect most punctiliously to render thanks for them.

Note:—Since the above was written, and actually in the press, the sad news has arrived of the premature death of the Hon. the Revd. A. A. Barclay. May this loss to his country and his race be soon made good by some other man of the same type!

Chapter XXII.

ODDS AND ENDS.

This chapter must be regarded as a kind of scrap heap. Its contents consist of matters which, having temporarily escaped my memory in the course of the main narrative, I have still thought worthy of presentation to my readers; of certain moralisings and reflections which do not exactly fit anywhere into the framework of my story; of various anecdotes of like description; and other things which may be grouped together as "et ceteras."

First of all, loth as I am to inflict upon the reader any more of my private concerns than I have already done, if the tragic story poured into his ears in the preceding pages has failed to arouse his sympathy, I feel confident that, unless his heart be of the quality of the nether millstone, the following illustration of my ill luck must succeed in doing so:—In the year 1923, my solicitor being away in England, I entrusted to a Kingston house agent, out of the hard-earned savings of my riper years, the money to purchase a house for me to settle down in on my retirement from the service. On my arrival in the metropolis in March 1924, I was met with the pleasant discovery that this man had embezzled upwards of £350 of my money.

I need say no more, except to reiterate my agreement with Bumble's verdict already quoted:—"The law is a ass." For although a criminal prosecution would not have had the effect of restoring my money,

I was debarred even from the satisfaction of undertaking that, by the fact that this particular sum had never been in my possession. The agent had received it on my behalf from a person who had purchased from me a house which I had bought without seeing, but which on inspection failed to please me. I had instructed him to sell this one and buy another.

He carried out my instructions, but transferred to his own pocket that portion of my money indicated above, which he had received from the purchaser of the first house. Therefore the judicial authority to whom I applied for a warrant ruled that a criminal prosecution could not lie. The man is dead, and my money is gone. Yes: "the law is a ass." That experience is the crowning mercy of my old age. It forms a fitting climax to my career, and one entirely consistent with the whole trend of it.

* * * * *

For many years past—and with greater insistence as time rolls on—we have been hearing the cry "Jamaica for the Jamaicans." Incidentally it may be remarked that it proceeds chiefly from politicians of a certain type, and that it will be a black day for this country if it should ever resolve itself into actuality. But I think my own career in the public service of the colony furnishes ample proof of the fact that even in a case where a deserving Jamaican is concerned—devoid of money or influence, with nothing but his own merits to recommend him—the cry is "mere-sound and fury, signifying nothing." I have never derived the slightest benefit, direct or indirect, from the-

fact that I am what another favourite catch-word calls "a son of the soil." The only man who, to my knowledge, ever exercised any influence on my behalf was my dear dead and gone friend, Sir John Pringle, a Scotsman.

When in 1909 Sir Sydney Olivier promoted over my head an Englishman who was ten years my junior in the service, the only man who ever said a word on my behalf in the Legislative Council was the member for St. James, as told in a former chapter. He was himself a Jamaican, it is true, but he was one with whom I never was—and could not possibly ever have been—on terms of social intercourse: whom in fact I had treated worse than a dog. Yet he set a luminous example to several other Jamaicans who sat there without opening their mouths, in spite of having known me—socially as well as officially—for many years. Among the many tributes to me uttered by this generous-hearted man was that my qualifications for the command of the entire force were vastly superior to those possessed by Inspector General Kershaw himself.

Again, in the case of the "John Crow Mountain" controversy of 1920, when my protagonist was an Englishman of the leisured and wealthy classes, many of my countrymen revealed in the press the true parrot-like nature of that cry; and at the same time the inherent snobbishness which forms another marked characteristic. This episode deserves a rather more extended notice, which I shall proceed to give:—

In the chapter describing my experiences in the parish of St. Thomas, I have mentioned the various explorations undertaken by me in the remote recesses of the Blue Mountains, as also the crossing of the

John Crow Mountains; and the fact that I had published accounts of these in a little volume entitled "Untrodden Jamaica." I may say that some of these expeditions—and notably the last named—were undertaken under the direct patronage of the Governor, Sir Henry Blake, and that of his gracious Lady, who, being herself of a literary turn, always took a deep interest in the descriptions of my adventures which used to appear from my pen in the pages of our local magazine, *The Victoria Quarterly*, then in the full bloom of its alas! too short-lived existence. She also exhibited great delight in the large collection of mountain orchids I always gathered on those expeditions, with which I presented her, and which were bestowed in a special sheltered nook of the garden at King's House. I had the honour of receiving many letters from her expressing her appreciation of my work; and my little book "Untrodden Jamaica" is, with her gracious permission, dedicated to her. Now, in the *Jamaica Gazette* of the 4th December, 1890, Sir Henry Blake caused to be published the following notice:—

"No. 465, 1st December, 1890.

The Governor directs it to be notified for general information that His Excellency desires the range of mountains in Portland and Saint Thomas known as "The John Crow Mountains" shall in future be known and designated as "The Blake Mountains," as a mark of appreciation of the services performed by Inspector Thomas in undertaking their exploration, and in accordance with the request of Mr. Thomas in the matter."

This notice was of course only issued after careful consideration by the Surveyor General's Depart-

ment of the report and the crude map accompanying it, which I had submitted to His Excellency; and for thirty years I enjoyed the reputation of being the sole explorer of this virgin territory. Then there descended on the shores of Jamaica a certain Mr. Scoresby Routledge: man of wealth and leisure, traveller, explorer, and big game hunter. Not content with his achievements in primeval European, Asiatic, African, American, and Australasian wilds, he actually undertook to rob poor, humble, insignificant me of my one little ewe lamb, the John Crow Mountains; which for thirty years I had treasured on this infinitesimal speck of the earth's surface of which I happen to be a native. I first came across him in May, 1920, in the streets of Black River, seeking for information with regard to hotel accommodation and banking facilities. I at once "placed" him; and I naturally proceeded to assist him in his quest; spending a part of the afternoon, and the evening in his company. I soon discovered that we had kindred tastes, and on learning his name I deeply aroused his interest by telling him that I had recently read in *The Field* of London, a lengthy review of a book his wife had written dealing with their exploration of the mysterious Easter Island in the Pacific. He himself had not yet seen the book. To make a long story short: after spending an evening with him I lent him my only copy of "Untrodden Jamaica," and he left Black River next day. I received from him a few days later a short letter accompanying the return of my book, but I never heard from him again; although I noticed in the *Gleaner* some account of his having undertaken an expedition to the John Crow Mountains. He passed away from

my mind entirely. To my great surprise I read some weeks later in the columns of the *Gleaner* the account of a lengthy interview which this gentleman had accorded in London to a reporter of *The Evening News*, boasting of his having crossed the John Crow Mountains of Jamaica, hitherto untrodden by human foot. In his rhodomontade there was no mention of my name, or any allusion to me whatever; unless his scornful description of having "discovered traces of some person having made a journey over the foothills" could be construed as such. To my still greater astonishment the editor of the *Gleaner* approved of and endorsed all of this, in spite of my remonstrances and my calling upon him for the vindication of my claims, which had stood unchallenged for thirty years. In reply I was treated with scorn and contumely. However, it very soon became apparent that I had influential friends in England to atone for the defection of my compatriots, and they rallied round me; some being personally strangers to me, and others former residents of Jamaica whose very existence I had lost sight of. Those gentlemen, among whom was Mr. Frank Cundall, Secretary of the Institute of Jamaica—he happening to be in England at the time—took up the cudgels on my behalf in the *Times* and the *West India Committee Circular*; while the leading English sporting paper, *The Field*, with whose editor, Sir T. A. Cook, I had been in correspondence during the whole war, devoted a great deal of space to my vindication; going so far as to print the little map inserted in "Untrodden Jamaica." The result was that the nefarious designs of Mr. Routledge were frustrated, and he was completely routed

(no pun intended of course) and driven from the field. However, on becoming aware of all this the local press abandoned its hostile attitude—although not until many weeks had passed—and made the *amende honorable* with the best grace it could. I did not then dispute—and I have never at any time attempted to dispute—the fact that Mr. Scoresby Routledge crossed the mountains. What I took exception to was his statement that no one else had ever accomplished that feat, and the entirely un-English character of his behaviour towards me. I have dwelt upon this episode because it furnishes such striking evidence of the insincerity of the cry “Jamaica for the Jamaicans,” and at the same time a demonstration of the truth of that Biblical saying:—“A prophet is not without honour save in his own country.” (In fact I think my whole career does that.) All sorts and conditions of people butted into the controversy; and for weeks the columns of the paper teemed with letters for me and against; some of the latter being written by schoolboys and other persons all equally ignorant of the facts, who had never seen “Untrodden Jamaica.” The hostile ranks were reinforced by no less a person than the Surveyor General, also a countryman of mine, but a total stranger to me. “Jamaica for the Jamaicans,” forsooth! The two examples which I have quoted belong to a bygone day—although the one of 1920 is not so very remote; but, as if to emphasise, accentuate and drive home to the hilt the truth of what I am endeavouring to illustrate, a third instance occurred at the very last sitting of the Legislative Council, in October, 1926. It will be quite fresh in the memories of my readers how in the

debate on the Cinematograph Law, six of my compatriots endeavoured to reduce by one-third a small salary which the government proposed to pay me in respect of certain duties for the performance of which they had done me the honour of selecting me; two of them being men whom I would have expected to jump at the chance of doing me a good turn. I trust that these fellowcountrymen of mine found abundant consolation for the failure of their efforts in the warm approval which they elicited from the editor of the *Gleaner*. This gentleman penned an editorial paean in praise of these men, holding them up to the sympathetic admiration of their countrymen as martyrs in a noble and patriotic cause; who, although defeated through the pusillanimity of certain of their own colleagues, had deserved well of their country—and his own, and mine. Of course his attitude in this instance was entirely consistent with that of the John Crow Mountain episode. [With respect to this latter I may say that I have a good deal more up my sleeve, with which I will for the nonce refrain from regaling the public—unless the occasion should arise for so doing. But it would be wise for certain persons to bear in mind the fact that I am no longer a member of the police force.] Jamaica for the Jamaicans, forsooth! Lord help the Jamaican who, like myself, has neither money nor influence, if he is pitted against a big man from “over water.”!

* * * * *

As a matter of course this book will be subjected to criticism of the most searching kind by those to

whom it would afford pleasure to find holes in it; and it therefore behoves me to be very careful of all my details. Some "fella" who wants to know, don't you know" may desire—and quite rightly—an explanation of certain discrepancies between my chronology and that of the "Handbook of Jamaica," in view of the fact that I date my own service as from the 8th January, 1877, and make myself out as twelve years senior to Mr. W. E. Clark; whereas in the "Handbook" the date of my "first appointment to public service" is given as 17th April, 1878, and that of Clark 1st December 1879. The explanation is this:—After I had served very nearly fourteen months—namely at the end of February, 1878—I was tempted by what promised to be a good prospect of leaving Jamaica for "fresh fields and pastures new." I went away on leave to the country, and—irresponsible young cub that I was—instead of waiting for the prospect to materialise, I resigned my appointment. The prospect vanished into thin air; and I then wrote the government asking to be allowed to withdraw my resignation, or, failing that, to be re-appointed. I am entitled to think that they must have looked upon me as a promising lad even then; for, notwithstanding the fact that there were about one hundred names on the waiting list for the appointment of Sub-Inspector, my request was at once acceded to, and the 17th April, 1878 was the date on which I reported myself in Kingston to take up Sub-Inspector's duty again. I was exactly one month out of the force. With regard to Mr. Clark: his "first appointment" may have been 1st December, 1879, but that was not to the Constabulary. He passed through two other departments, coming to us from the Post Of-

fice, twelve years junior to me as an Inspector of Police. So that's that.

* * * * *

I have done many things lying outside the scope of my duties as a police officer, tending to the general welfare of my country, to the advancement of its civilization, as well as to the prestige of the ruling race, and that of the force of which I was a member for forty-seven years. And I think I may say, without any suspicion of boasting, that only since I have been leading a quiet and sequestered life in Kingston have I come to the full realisation of the reputation that I have succeeded in establishing among the inhabitants of my island home. It has been a pleasing revelation to me, and the knowledge of it has helped to console me in the manifold sorrows and trials which have fallen to my lot. Some of my achievements have already been mentioned, and I shall now enumerate more of these extraneous services:—

When the Exhibition of 1891 was being organized the Commissioners appointed me a member of the Model Industrial Village Committee, and through the influence which I had even then gained over the peasantry of St. Thomas I was able to persuade three or four families of well-to-do small settlers to migrate to Kingston, and carry on their various industries: manufacturing "new" sugar, making grass hats, bamboo baskets, bark whips and ropes, cedar and figwood bowls, mortars and pestles for pounding coffee, banana trash mats and numerous other things. I shepherded these people to and from Kingston; watched

over them during their stay of three months; and distributed among them the remuneration which had been promised them. And this at a time when thousands of the black people were being deterred from visiting the Exhibition by the extraordinary rumours that were circulated all over the island with regard to the purpose of it. The wildest of these was that a ship was coming out from England laden with handcuffs and leg-irons, and that it was the intention of the whites, when all the people were assembled in the buildings, to close the doors, bind the blacks hand and foot, and once more establish slavery. (I would refer those who may call this impossible to the incident of the mule-woman described in chapter XXI; and, remember, this was thirty-five years previous).

I won the devotion of the entire East Indian population of St. Thomas—which was a pretty large one on account of the indentured labourers on the sugar estates—by diving down into fifteen feet of muddy water in a stream flowing through Lysson's estate after a flood rain, and bringing up from the bottom the body of a newly married coolie girl who had been drowned in it shortly before I passed along the road. There were a couple of hundred negro labourers on the spot, all of whom refused to make the attempt unless the coolies agreed to pay from £5 to £10. I determined to teach them a lesson, and I did it; although I had to go down five times and grope along the bed of the stream, unable to see on account of the mud. When I came to the surface the fifth time, grasping the corpse by the ankle—she was a beautiful little thing, not much more than a child—the coolies went wild with delight. The women ran up shrieking and

wailing and covered the body with sheets; while the men crowded round me kissing my hands and feet, and cursing the negroes in English until their stock of invectives in that tongue was exhausted, when they fell back on their native language. That was about the end of June, 1890, and for many weeks afterwards when riding along roads adjacent to canefields in which coolies were working, my passing used to be the signal for profound salaams; and I could see the older coolies pointing me out to new-comers (a fresh batch had just arrived) and hear them telling the strangers of what I had done. I knew enough Hindustani words to suffice for my understanding.

In 1893, when Jamaica was preparing for participation in the Chicago "World's Fair" as it was called, I was employed by the Chief Commissioner, the late Hon. C. J. Ward (donor of our theatre) to write the descriptive account of the island which accompanied our exhibits. My work was later plagiarised by certain Americans, who published a book on Jamaica, in the most shameless manner. These gentlemen cut out of it phrases, sentences, and whole paragraphs, for insertion in their publication, without one word acknowledging the source from which they had been derived.

While on leave in England in 1901-2, commissioned by Sir Alfred Jones, head of the Elder Dempster Company, I lectured on Jamaica four times in London: twice at the Imperial Institute, with the Earl of Stamford as my chairman on the first occasion, and Field-Marshal Sir Henry Norman on the second; once at the Society of Arts, as already described in detail, and again at the South Place Ethical Society. At the sec-

ond of these I had the pleasure of meeting once more Major-General H. Jardine Hallows, who had several times administered the government of Jamaica while commanding the troops here, and knew me well. He came specially to see me and to have a chat in the ante-room before my lecture began.

I also gave two lectures in Bedford, where my children were at school; one in the Town Hall and the other at the Grammar School itself. These lectures were illustrated by limelight views and curiosities of various kinds, and all were well attended by keenly appreciative audiences. An additional attraction was afforded to the one at the Bedford School by the exhibition of half-a-dozen fine bunches of bananas which Sir Alfred Jones sent me for distribution among the boys. On the outward voyage I also lectured in the saloon of the steamer to the tourist passengers.

It has sometimes happened that my knowledge of foreign languages has been of good service to the government. I have acted as interpreter, both in French and German, in courts and custom-houses.

The most notable instance of this occurred in 1898, about the time of the Spanish-American War, when I was stationed in Trelawny. Just at that juncture a very rigid quarantine had been established by our government against Cuba, for both hygienic and political reasons, and British cruisers were watching the north coast of this island, with headquarters at Montego Bay and Port Antonio. One Sunday morning I received a telegram at Falmouth from my corporal in charge of the Rio Bueno station, eighteen miles away, informing me that a party of Cubans had

landed at that place about daybreak from an open boat. Wiring him to prevent them from dispersing, if he possibly could, I hurried off to the residence of the Collector of Customs, and galvanised him into action. (He was not one whom I could conscientiously describe as an energetic person. He is long since dead.) I persuaded him to hire a buggy and start with me forthwith for Rio Bueno. On arriving there at about eleven o'clock I found that eighteen Cubans had landed from a very large canoe, and that my corporal had succeeded in gathering them into one of the wharf houses to await my arrival. Every one of the eighteen was armed with a long Cuban machete in a leather sheath, and I saw half-a-dozen revolvers as well. Not one of them knew a word of English, and there was no Spanish interpreter available. However after a few trials I discovered that one among them spoke very good French, on which I immediately "assumed charge of the situation," (to quote Sir Sydney Olivier), to the great delight of the Collector. It was really his job—I being merely his auxiliary—but he surrendered it only too willingly. The Cubans, who were a very gentlemanly lot, obeyed all my instructions most implicitly; subjecting themselves with the best grace possible to the confinement which I imposed on them; and the rest of the day was spent in working the telegraph to and from Kingston. I made things as pleasant as I could for them, and late in the afternoon their release was ordered by the authorities in Kingston. But if my services had not been available, a very unpleasant situation might easily have developed, and considerable expense have been entailed on the government in consequence. There were

no facilities whatever at Rio Bueno for meeting such an emergency.

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I need hardly say that these extraneous contributions of mine to the welfare of my country and the convenience of the government—not to mention others with which I abstain from boring my readers—have never proved of the least advantage to me, or obtained for me any extra remuneration (with the exception of the Chicago matter) or official recognition whatever. Indeed, the unpleasant conviction has forced itself upon me in the course of the years that the very advantages which Nature and education bestowed on me, combined with my gratuitous zeal, have aroused in certain circles of my countrymen nought but a feeling of resentment.

* * * * *

I do not think that I have ever been what is called a "popular" police officer—that is among the majority of people of my own social class,—although I have found hearts of gold here and there. But when there was "Constabulary duty to be done," as W. S. Gilbert sings, they knew who could be relied on to do it thoroughly and effectively. Even the Custos of Westmoreland once in my hearing warned a man who was making himself objectionable at the gate of his premises that he had better be careful what he was about, as he (the Custos) had at hand just the right man to deal with

him—meaning me. With regard to the friendly sentiments towards me of the humbler classes in the parishes where I spent most of my life, even including Westmoreland—that is the mountain districts of that parish—I am in no doubt whatsoever.

It is very easy to become a “popular” police officer. There are various ways of doing it. One is to be hail-fellow-well-met with Richard, Thomas, and Henry; to drink with them at public bars; to “shut the other eye” when they become drunk and disorderly or exceed the speed limit; be always ready to put them in the way of procuring drinks after legal hours—or of even more disreputable diversions. And if among your boon companions you can include newspaper reporters of a certain type, then your success is assured; you are a “nice chap,” and all your official doings will be chronicled with frills round them. This variety will not be unfamiliar to my readers. Another way is to maintain a sober, staid and unctuous demeanour, slightly dashed with religion; to be “all things to all men”; never to say “no” except under the pressure of absolutely irresistible necessity; to be always suavely obsequious and tactful, obliging everybody. The former type is more common than the latter, which indeed postulates the possession of certain exceptional gifts. There used to be a shining example of this sort in the force; he was so full of tact that he never engaged in a row during the whole of his long career, but always contrived, when one appeared imminent, to pass it on to his sergeant-major. His actual physical courage was more than under suspicion among his contemporaries; yet he always managed to secure the plums of the service with respect to stations. He-

never served in more than three—or at the outside four—parishes. In one he remained for eighteen years, and in the last in which he was stationed—the most desirable of all—the term of his stay was just short of twenty years. He refused the post of Deputy Inspector General, doubtless because it would have taken him to Kingston, where he would, sooner or later, have had to face a row. On one occasion he was sent, on account of his seniority, by an Inspector General who had not yet learnt to know his officers, to take command of a large force of armed police which was awaiting developments on the scene of certain demonstrations hostile to the cause of law and order, and on arrival at his base of operations he went straight to bed, suffering, it was said, from malaria. The junior officer—himself “a first class fighting man”—from whom he was to take over the command, called his ailment by quite a different name—and used a much shorter word—when telling me the story. He was that *rara avis in terris*, an Inspector of Police with private means. And everybody in speaking of him always took care to say:—“What a nice chap, eh?” He is dead.

Another case of gross favouritism was that of a certain Inspector who was permitted to remain in St. Andrew for twenty-two years; Halfway Tree being, from the social point of view, absolutely the blue riband of the service. But this man was married to a lady of ample means, and they used to give dinners, garden parties and other social entertainments for the delectation of the *élite* of St. Andrew and Kingston. At length, after the expiration of the twenty-two years, the Governor of the day took

his courage in both hands and ordered this Inspector to be transferred to St. Thomas, where it would be necessary for him to do some police work. This so aroused his indignation that he immediately resigned his appointment, even foregoing his pension. Saint Thomas might do very well for ordinary folk like myself, and some other officers of the force, but it was too much to expect that he would tamely submit to being removed thither. He is also dead; while I, the contemporary of both the men described, am very much alive; despite the fact that, with the exception of a few months of intermittent residence in Mandeville, my lot has for the most part been cast in the worst hot-beds of malaria which the island contains. Very true indeed is the old saying:—"One man may steal a horse, while another may not look over the hedge"—even in the public service of this country. This proverb, by the way, reminds me of yet another case which forms a still stronger illustration of it:—On one occasion, several years ago, a certain Inspector, in open Court of Petty Sessions, with two Justices sitting on the bench, in the presence of his own men and of the assembled public, picked up an inkstand full of ink and flung it across the table of the court at a solicitor who was annoying him by opposing certain arguments of his in a police case. Not only was he not made to suffer for this piece of playfulness, but on the occurrence of a vacancy in a higher rank some three months later, he was actually promoted! I have often wondered what my fate would have been, had I been guilty of such an indiscretion. The least that I could have expected would have been instant and peremptory dismissal; and I should have considered myself lucky not to have a sentence of

penal servitude thrown in. Of course it may have been a mere coincidence that just at this juncture the officer in question had two near relatives occupying high official positions—one of them very high indeed.

The only two parishes in which I have never been stationed at any time are St. Ann (which is one of the “plums” above referred to) and Portland.

* * * * *

I am sometimes inclined to think that one of the reasons of my having failed to achieve a cheap popularity is the uncompromising impartiality which I have mentioned in a previous chapter. I have never wittingly and wilfully harmed man, woman, or child; but of course in the very nature of my calling it has been necessary for me to make things unpleasant for a great many people; and I have never allowed any personal consideration to influence me in what I considered to be the proper discharge of my duty. It has thus fallen to my lot to bring about the retirement of three undesirables from the public service. Two such cases are mentioned in previous chapters; but in the most recent and notorious one—which has not been mentioned—the victim may be said to have committed suicide, and to have possessed less intelligence than I gave him credit for. He had known me very well indeed for a number of years, during which we had maintained a very pleasant social intercourse; and if there was one thing about me that he knew better than another, it was that no man had anything to teach me in respect of my job. Yet he wilfully and deliberately went out of his way to interfere with me, and tread on my corns officially; with the

painful result that he ceased to grace the public service with his presence. His molestation of me was merely the culminating point of a long series of delinquencies, but he turned down the wrong street that time. I have never seen such a forcible demonstration of the truth of the old Latin saying:—*Quem deus vult perdere prius dementat*.

In the original manuscript of this chapter I had mercifully brought my brief sketch of this episode to a conclusion with the above appropriate Latin quotation; but before it was put into print I made the discovery that the subject of it was seeking to wreak his vengeance on me through anonymous attacks of an offensive nature in the public press. In so doing he has made a further display of the lack of intelligence which I have imputed to him; of the defect in his knowledge of human nature which prevents him even now from realising the sort of man with whom he is dealing; and, above all, of a fatuous disregard of the good old maxim which warns persons living in glass houses against the danger of throwing stones. In view, therefore, of the course which he has seen fit to adopt, I think it expedient, and of public interest, to supplement my sketch with a few details of the happenings which led to his downfall. These, I think, form an amazing story, quite worthy of a place among the other amazing stories with which this book abounds. Incidentally, it provides a further illustration of the proverb about the horse and the hedge which is quoted in an earlier portion of this chapter; for I am credibly informed that this man's diversions had been a matter of notoriety long, long ere his career was terminated by falling foul of me.

To begin with: he was the biggest game I ever

brought down, being no less a personage than the Resident Magistrate of a certain parish. His interference with me was a totally arbitrary and illegal act in connection with a criminal case occurring in a parish other than his own, committed at the instance of a certain tavern-keeper who was one of his associates. But this merely brought to a head a long series of misdeeds, which resulted in his being interdicted from duty, and, among other things, in my having to go to Kingston as a witness against him before a Privy Council Committee.

While the proceedings were pending I one day received from Mr. St. John Yates, then Acting Attorney General, a telegram requesting me to meet him in a certain town on the following day. I did so, and together we journeyed to the office of the court over which this person presided, to inspect the register of process received from other courts. There we found, entered in the books of his own court, some eight or ten judgment summonses, and commitments for debt, against himself. He had been, to my knowledge, arrested by his own bailiff on one of these commitments, but rescued from *durance vile* by the intervention of His Honour the Custos of the parish, who, in the goodness of his heart, advanced the necessary money.

The bailiff, an old sergeant of mine, whose name I have mentioned in the second chapter on the Maroons, had come to me more than once, seeking my advice as to what course he should adopt in the entirely extraordinary and unprecedented position in which he was thus placed.

Mr. Yates himself told me that he had been obliged to issue a writ of ejectment against this person,

in order to compel him to evacuate certain government quarters which he had refused to leave.

The above represent only a very few of his little peccadilloes; but the sum total of them reached such dimensions that the Custos of the parish, and the head of the Presbyterian Church, called me into consultation and asked me to draw up a report supplementing the information which they had obtained.

I did so; and the Custos duly forwarded it in a confidential letter to the Governor direct. The result of these proceedings was the compulsory retirement of this ornament to the judicial bench, and dispenser of British justice, on a greatly abbreviated pension. "Verily the half hath not been told;" but in my humble opinion the case was again one which called for the hand of a Swettenham to be adequately dealt with.

In addition, and, perhaps, complementary to all his other gifts, the hero of this tale possesses the faculty of a perfectly brazen impudence. Of this he gave the most convincing demonstration when, after his fate had been finally sealed, he actually approached the Clerk of Courts with a proposal to issue proceedings against His Honour the Custos, His Reverence the Scotch minister, and myself, for conspiracy!

I think my readers will agree that this story is at least fit to take its place among the others recorded in this book; and it only remains for me to say that all the documentary evidence confirming it—and a great deal more besides—is to be found in the records of the Privy Council. Again I am forced to utter the Latin saying above quoted.

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When I think of the school in which I was trained, and of the physical hardships which I underwent during my term of service in the police, as described in these pages, I cannot resist a feeling of amusement, not untinged with disdain, at the sight of the young officers of the force now rolling along the streets in motor cars, I am pleased, however, to observe that the eternal fitness of things has been so far recognized that they no longer wear spurs when thus engaged.

When I was stationed in Trelawny I learnt to ride a bicycle at the age of forty; and on that vehicle—a push-bike of course—I used to visit all my stations with exception of two distant ones up in the mountains. And this although I owned a buggy and horses. I will refrain from harrowing the feelings of the reader by descriptions of what I endured between my forty-seventh and my fifty-fourth year, when I was forced to do all my travelling on horseback, as described in a previous chapter, in St. Elizabeth and Westmoreland. I will draw a veil.

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It occurs to me that, with respect to my deploring the fact of so many of the witnesses of the events herein narrated having passed away to the Great Beyond, there still remain two who will gladly bear me out regarding my activities in the parish of Saint Thomas. They are the Hon. J. H. Phillippo, who for some years past has represented—and still represents—that parish in the Legislative Council, and Mr. E. B. Hopkins, now of the Jamaica Fruit and

Shipping Company, but formerly of Baker and Co. I know that I can with confidence leave my reputation in their hands, as friends of over forty years' standing.

* * * * *

I have in a previous chapter referred to my physical equipment in respect of vitality, health, and strength; and my senile vanity now prompts me to relate a story which not only proves it, but also further illustrates my persistent ill luck:—On an afternoon towards the end of July, 1926, when my seventieth birthday lay six weeks behind me, I crossed the Halfway Tree road at the bridge where the Central Road joins it, to board a down tram-car, failing to observe that it was not a passenger car. The driver slowed down when he saw me crossing the road in front of it, and, just as I made the discovery that it was a freight car, a cart came up suddenly from behind it, in the narrow space between the lines and the railing of the bridge, drawn by one mule, going at a trot, and with two men sitting on it. My back was then turned to the street car, which was still moving, and to escape being impaled, or run over, I stepped backwards and was knocked down by the car flat on my back, while one wheel of the cart passed right across both my knees as I lay with outstretched legs on the road. The cart did not stop, but two of the men on the car—all of whom were most attentive—with a constable who came up, ran after it and stopped it. But, having ascertained that no bones were broken, I made no further fuss, boarded the next

passenger car and returned to town. I never saw a doctor, and the following day I attended a cricket match at Sabina Park.

* * * * *

I think that at least one episode in my variegated career which is described at length, namely my compulsory trip to England at my own expense in 1909, ought to serve as a warning to the younger members of the Civil Service similar to the one embodied in Dr. Watts's hymn:—"Children you should never let your angry passions rise." It should teach them to hold in restraint any feelings of wrath, resentment and indignation, aggravated by a sense of helplessness, aroused in them by what they may regard as injustice. Otherwise the last state of that man may prove worse than the first: as in my case. As everyone knows, the most sacred fetish of officialdom is "Precedent"—with a capital "P". I am not aware that there was any precedent for the treatment meted out to me; but even if there was not, one has now been established beyond any doubt. I am irresistibly reminded, in this connection, of the story of the farmer who was being driven in a hansom along a street in London in a hurry to catch a train. The horse was not going fast enough to please him, so he sang out to the driver: "'It 'im on the raw, cabby; 'It 'im on the raw."

"'E ain't got no raw."

"Well, dammit, make one!"

Very little reflection will convince the intelligent reader of the aptness of the illustration.

Another fatal indiscretion against which I should warn young civil servants is that of deluding themselves into the belief that government makes any account of them as human beings. They can take it from a seasoned veteran of many storms like myself that they are regarded simply as cogs in a machine.

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I anticipate that among the many varied effects which the appearance of this book is destined to produce, not the least will be the awakening of thoughtful residents of Kingston to a realisation of the fact that deeds of importance in the life of the community are frequently being done in the country parts of the island, but that these remain in obscurity because the men who do them have no newspaper reporters at their elbows to chronicle them (and very often make mountains out of mole-hills). Most dwellers in the metropolis are so deeply engrossed in making money, and playing at politics, and so wrapped up in the delights of Myrtle Bank Hotel, Bournemouth Bath, moving pictures, Cable Hut, and other resorts, that they have no time to read the "news" unless their attention is attracted by a flaring headline. And I don't altogether blame them; for the average rural correspondent—usually a schoolmaster, the choice being necessarily severely limited—appears to live within the bounds of an extremely narrow horizon. As a rule the most important events of which he takes note are the gaining of one mark by the school at

Jiggerfoot Market* at the last inspection; the latest missionary meeting; the infant school at Fat Hog Quarter* preparing for an elocution contest; the "pretty little wedding" at which Miss Iteletia Pumpkin was joined in holy matrimony to Mr. Zephaniah Kokohed in "the sacred edifice;" the removal of a constable; the postmistress's gumboil; a boy falling off a breadfruit tree; the death of old Daddy Yamstick "casting a gloom" over the community; an accident to Mr. Roseapple's mule; and other happenings of a similarly exciting nature; none of the actors in which—including the mule—are known to fame beyond the confines of his particular hamlet.

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Another development which I await with confidence as resulting from the publication of this book is that some of the persons whose dealings with me I have so ruthlessly exposed in narrating the vicissitudes of my career, finding themselves unable to impugn the correctness of my statements, and not daring to seek in a legitimate manner such redress as they may consider themselves entitled to, will complain to the government, insisting upon the impropriety of a mere pensioner, devoid of any other means of subsistence, placing their words and deeds on record in public print. And they will demand that I shall, as the price of my temerity, be deprived of my pension, and condemned to end my few remaining years in the Kingston and St. Andrew Poor House. Such a proceeding is not uncommon in this country,

*These are real names.

and would be no novelty to me. I will quote two instances out of many. Over forty years ago I brought to his knees the editor of a certain newspaper that was a great power in the land in the course of correspondence which I undertook for the purpose of vindicating a dear friend of mine who had been aspersed in the columns of the paper by a country correspondent. This editor, in his characteristically lofty style, attempted at first to brush me aside as being beneath his notice; but when I wrote him a letter which he did not dare to publish for fear of making himself the object of ridicule, it suddenly suited him to remember that I was a public officer. He thereupon resorted to the expedient of reporting me to the Governor—then Sir Henry Norman—for wounding his dignity. The reply he received was that the matter was a private one in which His Excellency did not feel called upon to interfere. Again, in 1891, a certain printer and publisher, with whom I was then transacting business, at one time had an acceptance of mine for a certain sum, and when near maturity I represented to him that it would be a convenience to me if he would allow me to pay half the amount and renew for the balance; a financial operation which, to the best of my knowledge, is not at all uncommon in Jamaica. My application was met with an indignant refusal, accompanied by a threat that if I failed to retire the document in full at maturity he would report me to the Inspector General. (I am sorry to say that my reply to him is not fit for publication). I have no doubt that among my readers in the Civil Service there will be several who have undergone similar experiences.

I think also that I have given at least one illustration of the baneful effect which a course of meticulous crossing of "t's" and dotting of "i's" extending over several decades may produce on a human mind of congenitally exiguous dimensions: how it sometimes results in the conversion of the individual's bowels of compassion into red tape, and of his brains into foolscap pulp.

* * * * *

In closing this chapter with a couple of anecdotes, I may remark, incidentally, that most of the stories which I could tell illustrative of the psychology and of the moral and social aspects of the life of the people, cannot be reproduced in print of any pretensions to respectability; therefore my choice is restricted. There is in particular a thoroughly typical one of a tragic event which befell in St. Thomas, having an alligator as the dominating figure. Strangers visiting the east end of that parish have flatly refused to believe it until it was verified by me, to whom the said strangers were referred. But this story cannot possibly be set down here. I must therefore perforce confine myself to such as are printable.

In 1871, when the first census was taken in Jamaica, a well-to-do small settler of St. Thomas in filling up the form under the heading of "Occupation," described himself as an "Aperient." The Collector of Taxes, who was chief enumerator for the parish, observing this, and knowing the man well, asked him one day what he meant by it. "Oh! sir," replied the man, "don't you know that I keep bees?" That was

before my time, of course, but I had the story from the Collector himself.

In later years, after the Births and Deaths Registration Law was in force, a woman one day came to Morant Bay to register the birth of a female infant. On being asked by the Registrar whether the child had been named, she promptly replied:—"Oh, yes, sah, me give him name 'Urina.' I was a witness to that.

* * * * *

Among the well-connected degenerates frequently foisted on the public service of this colony in former years was a scion of nobility, who was appointed to the police at the same time as myself, but as I joined before his arrival in the island I ranked as senior to him. We did Sub-Inspector's duty in Kingston together; but in 1878, owing to the hiatus of a month in my service described in a former part of this chapter, he stepped over my head and was sent out first to take charge of a country division. Physically he was anything but an ornament to the force, being a long, lank, narrow-chested, spindle-shanked, parrot-toed, and altogether sloppy-looking specimen of humanity. To add to his attractions he grew at one time a downy "Newgate fringe" round his pasty face, without any moustache to speak of. His mental equipment was on lines similar to his physical; but trifles of that kind were not in those days allowed to handicap a man both of whose grandfathers were "belted earls." So in the course of time he was offered (and accepted) promotion to one of the little islands, where he would be head of the entire police force. At this junc-

ture the gentleman in question was in command of a country division; and it was when discussing the report of his promotion with the then Inspector General while on a visit of inspection to me in St. Thomas, that the latter told me the story I am about to relate. He began by saying:—"Yes, it is quite true, and I have advised him to accept it, as I don't think he can last much longer here." He then proceeded to tell me that he had been paying a surprise visit to this man's division in the previous week, and that on arriving at one of his hill stations early in the forenoon he had found all the doors and windows wide open, and not a soul on the premises but a ragged black lad sitting on the ground engaged in cleaning a bit and pair of stirrup-irons, who looked up at him with a grin of welcome, saying:—"Mahnin, sah." The following dialogue then ensued:—

I. G. "Where is the sergeant?"

Boy: "Him gahn to Retreat, sah."

I. G.: "Where are all the constables?"

Boy: "Dem all gahn out, sah."

I. G.: "Then is nobody here at all?"

Boy: "Only me wan, no mo,' sah."

I. G.: "And who are you?"

Boy (increasing the breadth of his grin): "Please sah, I is de prisoner, sah."

The hero of this story is now also dead.

I hope my readers will pardon my temerity, and attribute it to my faith in their indulgence, if I wind up by inflicting on them yet another specimen of my poetic inspiration: in humorous vein this time. The man to whom it is addressed—now many years dead—was a great friend of mine over forty years ago. He

was a young barrister practising in Kingston and living in the same house as myself. Allan Kerr was his name; and he used to call me "Tommy." In July, 1884, while he was absent from Kingston on circuit, I was suddenly ordered away to St. Thomas, and when he returned home my place was vacant. He wrote me a reproachful letter, to which I sent a reply in the form of the following parody of the well-known song "In the Gloaming." I should state that it had been my custom every evening shortly before dinner, to construct cocktails for our mutual benefit, with the aid of the old-fashioned swizzle-stick—an art in which I used to be rather renowned for my proficiency:—

IN THE GLOAMING.

In the gloaming oh! my Allan,
When the gas has just been lit,
As you wander to the sideboard,
Stop and think of me a bit.
Think of me as drops the bitters
Staining ruby red the glass,
Say of me as flows the syrup:—
"Tommy, where art thou, alas?"

In the gloaming oh! my Allan
While the sparkling ice you crush,
While you measure out the "square-face"
Do not mem'ries o'er you rush
Of the hand that used to swizzle—
Swizzle till you shouted "stop,"
Of the throat that e'er was ready
For the cocktail's latest drop?

In the gloaming oh! my Allan
Think not bitterly of me,
Though I passed away so meanly,
Left you lonely, left you free;
For your hand was getting shaky,
You would soon have had D. T.,
It was best to leave you thus, dear,
Best for you and best for me.

* * * * *

L'ENVOI.

I have purposely introduced into the concluding portion of my story a lighter vein, in order to relieve, if possible, the atmosphere of gloom which enshrouds it. But the reader will have seen how persistently my footsteps have been dogged by ill luck, and my path beset with duplicity, injustice and cowardice, resulting in the total destruction not only of my official career, but also of my domestic life. I trust though that he will also recognize the fact that all this has failed to kill my loyalty to the interests of the public and the government of my country.

In the course of this narrative I have quoted several negro proverbs. I now finally commend yet another to the notice of the various personages at whose hands I have suffered during my long career. It is this:—

“Time longer dan rope.”

Next, so as to adorn my tale of woe with a more classical and artistic ending, I further invite their con-

temptation of the words spoken by Romola, the heroine of George Eliot's novel of that name, to Tito:—"You may kill children, but you can't kill deeds."

And, last of all, I would remind them of the good old Latin adage:—

Magna est veritas, et prevalebit.

THE END.

AFTERTHOUGHTS.

It seems in the nature of a paradox to add something to a book after "The End" has been written; but there are already in this book so many paradoxes that one more cannot make any difference to the reader. It has occurred to me since this "Story" of mine has been in the press that I might with advantage add to the mass of information and material for reflection which it contains two or three items of interest.

* * * * *

First of all, I consider it my duty to pay some tribute to the various judicial authorities under whom I served during my long career; whose esteem and confidence I had the good fortune to win; and who, in consequence, accorded me their loyal support and cordial cooperation in the discharge of my often trying and unpleasant duties.

Above all remains graven on my memory the figure of that grand old man Mr. Henry John Bicknell, who was, under the old judicial system, prior to the introduction of the present one in 1888, the Stipendiary Magistrate for Kingston. Sitting and dispensing justice day by day as he did in the old "Police Court," with no uncertain hand, he was affectionately known among the lower orders as "Tata" Bicknell. He taught me my job on the legal side; and he conceived an interest in me, and a liking for me, which led him al-

ways to treat me like a son, and to guide my youthful and inexperienced footsteps in the right path. He was later appointed, under the new system, Resident Magistrate for St. Thomas, in which parish I once more had the pleasure and the privilege of serving under him. Our friendship continued up to the day of his death; and I still hold him in affectionate remembrance.

Among the gentlemen of more recent years occupying the post of Resident Magistrate, I have in previous pages paid tribute to Their Honours Mr. C. Halman Beard, and Mr. W. P. Clark. I now desire to add to their names that of Mr. C. M. Calder, with whom I was associated for a longer period than with any of the others: in Trelawny—his first appointment—Westmoreland, and Hanover. He always saw eye to eye with me; and his methods in criminal matters were invariably in exact accordance with my own views. He retired from the service two or three years before I did; but we did duty together for nearly ten years in the aggregate.

I must also mention the late Sir Richard Orpen, and Mr. I. Richard Reece, with both of whom I served in St. Elizabeth and Manchester. During my absence on my compulsory trip to England in 1909, which is told in a previous chapter, Mr. Reece commented on it in the most sympathetic manner from the bench in Black River, and told the assembled court that the sound of my name was sufficient to keep order in the parish. I don't think any police officer could desire a higher tribute from a judicial authority than that.

In that portion of the last chapter describing the model police officer who at a critical juncture fell a victim to "malaria," I omitted to mention that the King's Police Medal was actually bestowed on him almost immediately after its institution, in the reign of Sir Sydney Olivier. Wherein his claims to that distinction lay is a matter known to no man except Lieutenant-Colonel Kershaw of the Cork Militia, who, naturally, must have been instrumental in obtaining it for him. Simultaneously the same decoration was conferred upon the gallant Colonel himself; but of course there could not possibly be any cavil about that, as he had richly deserved it, by his loyal co-operation and assistance rendered to the Illustrious Fabian in ruining my career and wrecking my domestic life, as fully described in Chapters XIII and XIV.

* * * * *

In recounting in the last chapter of this book the attempt made by six of my worthy compatriots in the Legislative Council to deprive me of £50 out of the £150 which the government proposed to pay me as film censor, I indicated two men whose attitude in the matter came as an unpleasant surprise to me. They were both representatives of parishes in which I had served for lengthened periods; and both had on more than one occasion expressed to me their opinion that I had been badly treated by the government. But there is a third, who, as I shall presently show, earned for himself still greater distinction. He is the representative of a parish in which I never enjoyed the privi-

lege of being stationed, and is only a recent acquaintance. He is by way of being a literary person, and conducts a monthly journal. In this he published during 1926 a series of descriptive and biographical notices under this heading:—

“SONS OF THE SOIL

THE MEN WITH BACKBONE—WHOM WE DELIGHT TO
HONOUR.”

In the July 1926 issue of this publication I was given the place of honour, being the very first mentioned; and an exceedingly nicely written, concise, and accurate summary of my life and career appeared, accompanied by a copy of the same photograph which forms the frontispiece of this book; all the material for which he had obtained by special request from me, of course.

I think it must be admitted that he made a curious and perplexing display of his “Delight to Honour” this “Son of the Soil” when not three months later he did his best to reduce my paltry salary by one-third. Verily, as Shakespeare says:—“Consistency thou art a jewel!” But of course one can hardly expect the rules and conventions which guide the lives and conduct of ordinary mortals to be binding on an magnate of such potency in the scheme of things as to be able, from his remote country seat, to telegraph the Superintendent of the General Penitentiary to suspend the flogging to which mutinous convicts had been sentenced by competent authority until the receipt of further orders from him!!!

Among the arguments used by this band of patriots in the course of the debate on my salary was a

sneering suggestion—fully endorsed by that other high-souled patriot of the *Gleaner*—that the job was being created by the government with the object of eking out my inadequate pension. I am perfectly certain that the government was innocent of any such philanthropic intentions towards me; but in one respect my patriotic fellow Jamaicans were right. The pension is inadequate to all the needs, past and present, of which the intelligent reader of this book will be able to form some estimate; and the spirit in which the pension regulations are framed is of so generous a nature that I can only claim on forty of my forty-seven years service; and it would not be one penny more if I had served for one hundred and forty-seven years.

The total amount which I draw is considerably less than the sum which the patriot last discussed contrives annually to extract as travelling allowance from the coffers of a grateful country.

Thus at length "The End" has been reached; or, in the light of the achievements of the patriot last described it may quite as appropriately be termed

"THE LIMIT."

Map of
JAMAICA

- | | | | |
|------------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| Boundaries of Counties | ----- | Towns and Villages | □ |
| Parishes | | Churches and Chapels | + |
| Railways & Stations | —+— | District Court Stations | • |
| under construction | ---- | Estates and Settlements | • |
| Motor Roads | ===== | Swamps | ~~~~~ |
| Other | ----- | Canals | —+— |
| Dry-dock Paths | ----- | Rivers | ~~~~~ |
| Post Offices | • | Police Stations | △ |

Scale of Statute Miles

0 5 10 15 20 25



12/19/57

+ HV 7911 .T41 T641

THOMAS, HERBERT THEODORE.

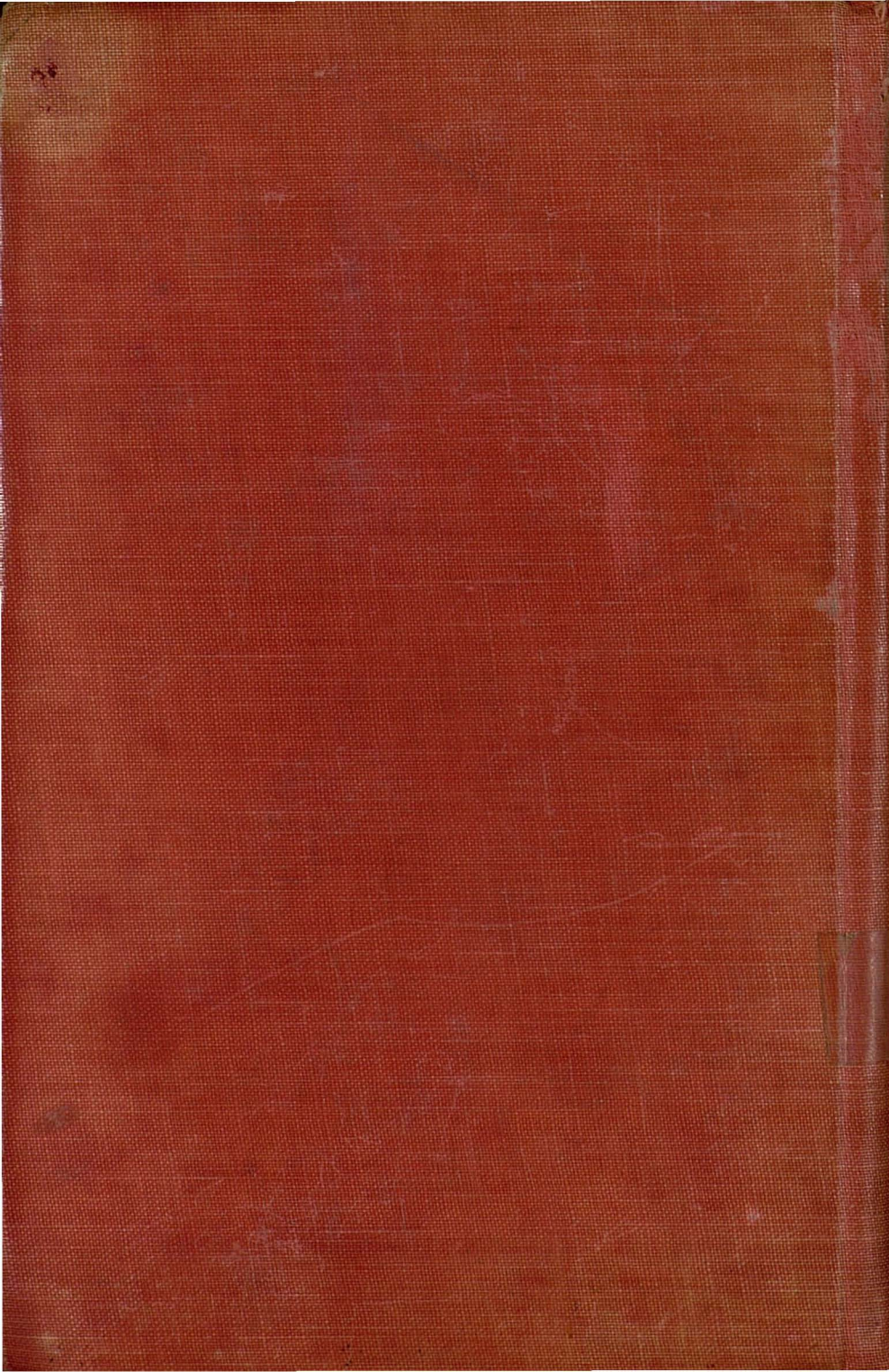
THE STORY OF A WEST INDIAN
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